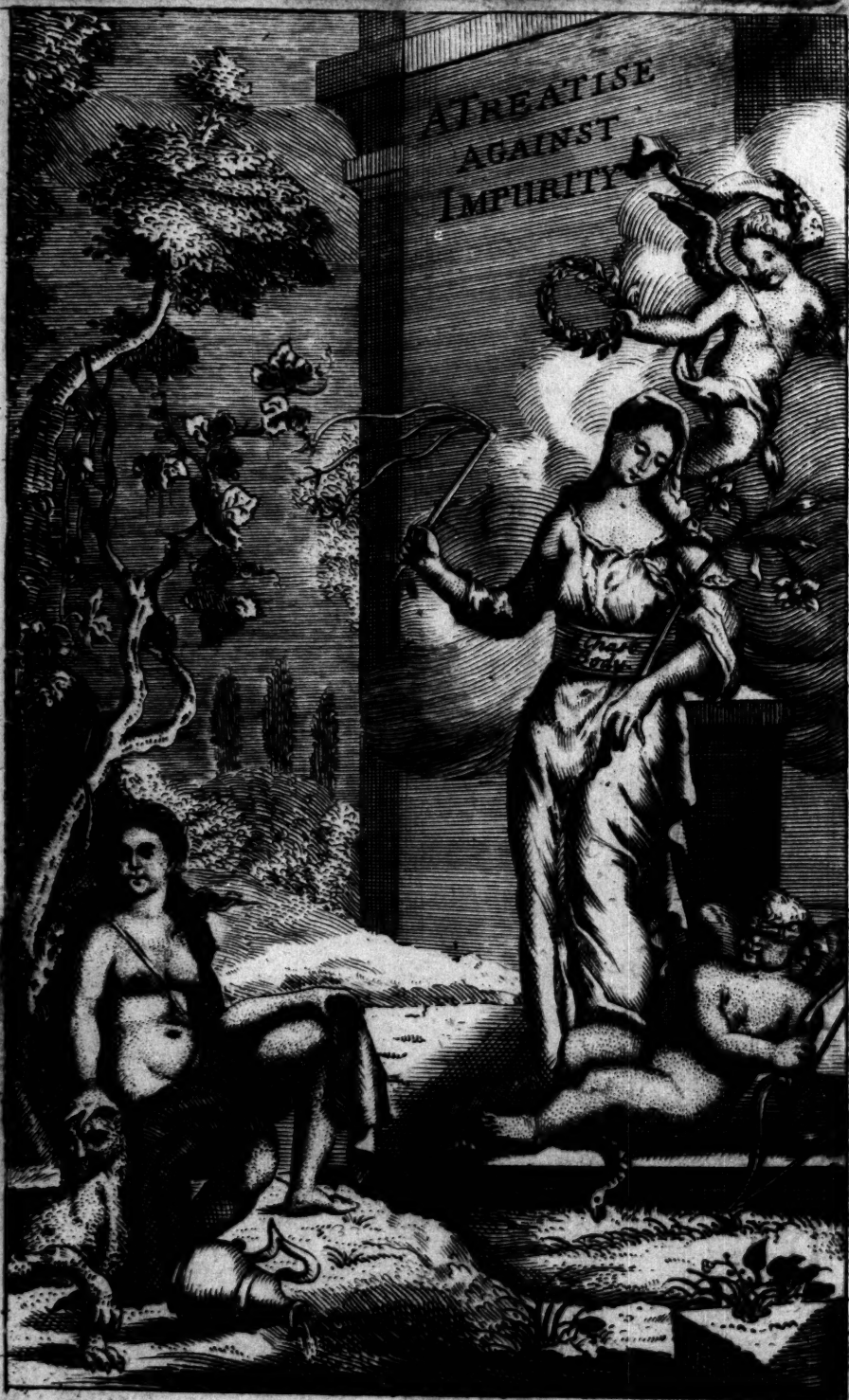
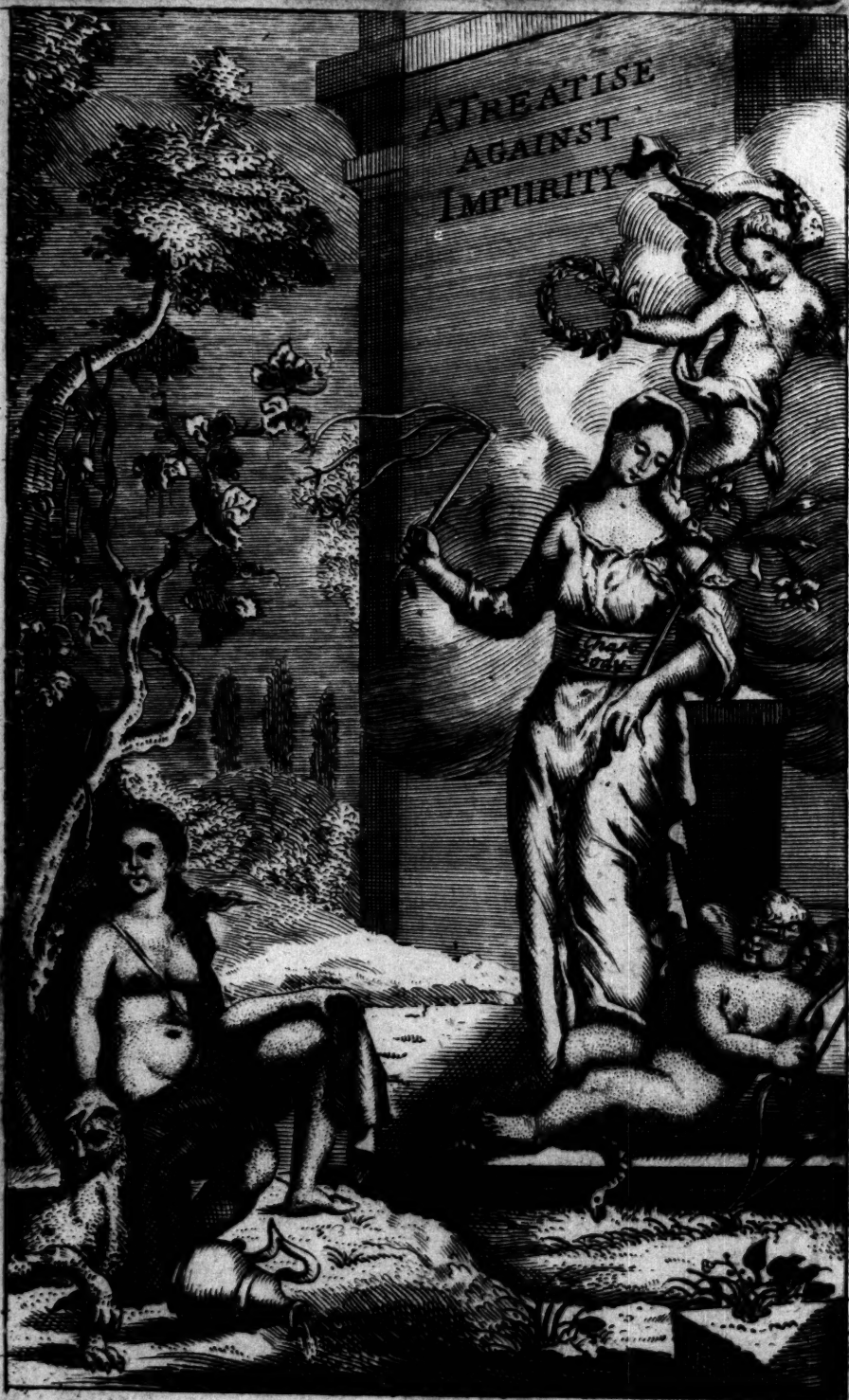






The Nature of
Uncleanness

CONSIDER'D:

Wherein is discoursed of the
Causes and Consequences of
this Sin, and the Duties of such
as are under the Guilt of it.

To which is added, A

DISCOURSE

Concerning the Nature of

CHASTITY,
And the Means of Obtaining it.

By **J. F. OSTERV^WALD**, Minister of the
Church of Neuschâtel, Author of *A Treatise
of the Causes of the present Corruption of Chri-
stians, A Catechism, &c.*

L O N D O N,

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T O T H E
R E A D E R.

TH E following Discourse was written, as the Title-Page imports, by the Learned and Judicious Mr. *Ostervald*, Preacher in *Switzerland*, at *Neuschâtel* as the *French*, or as the *Germans* call it *Newenburg*, a City with a small Principality belonging to it; and upon this account a Place of some Note, especially at present, because of the Disputes that have been of late, and are not yet wholly composed, concerning the Sovereignty of it. And he is not only an Author of great Fame there, but in his neighbouring City of *Geneva*, and other Places. And in our own Nation he is not only had in great Esteem, for the particular Respect he has shewn to the *English* Liturgy, and his Endeavours to introduce a like Worship amongst his Neighbours, but for his excellent Writings likewise; which have no sooner appeared amongst us, but they have been received with a general Applause. His *Treatise of the Causes of the present Corruption of Christians*, and the Remedies thereof, was quickly cried up, and admired by the best Judges of solid Reason, and sound Divinity,

and was presently publish'd in our own Tongue, for the Benefit of such as understand not the *French Language*.

His *Catechetical Discourse* likewise explaining the *Grounds and Principles of the Christian Religion*, did not only meet with a hearty Welcome here ; but was soon Translated into *English*, by the Ingenious Mr. *Wanly* ; and Revised by the Reverend and Learned Doctor *Stanhope* Dean of *Canterbury*, at the Request of the *Society for Propagating Religion* : And met with such Approbation from the *Corporation De Promovendo Evangelio*, that their Missionaries are all Ordered to take their Share of its Copies along with them into the Foreign Plantations, whither they are sent. Which, considering the Nature of this Illustrious Society, that it consists of Persons of diverse, and some of them of the Highest Ranks and Degrees, both Ecclesiastical and others, all the Prelates, and many of the chief Dignitaries, and others of Note among the Clergy, and many of the Nobility and Gentlemen of Quality and great Worth, I take to be a noble Testimony to its Value, and a singular Recommendation of it, as highly useful to the Ends whereto it was designed, the Promotion of God's Glory, and Instruction of the Pious and Well-disposed Readers, especially those of the Younger Sort.

And this Discourse here published, being not only the same Author's, but well worthy of Him too, it is to be hoped, will not meet with
a less

a less favourable Reception than those that have gone before it : Especially considering the Subjects handled in it, *Uncleanness*, and *Chastity*, both of them of very great Importance, and yet concerning which less has been written, either in our Own or Foreign Languages, than of most other Vices or Virtues. The most probable Cause of which Defect, I take to be what Himself assigns in the beginning of his Preface, namely, *The Nature of the Subject*, and the Difficulty of managing it with such Prudence and Caution, as neither to omit what is necessary to be said, nor to say any thing that the Lustful and Licentious may not turn to Sport and Ridicule, or to some farther Improvement in their Vice.

For it is too plain, as Bishop Taylor observes, in his *Rules and Exercises of Holy Living*, Sect. 2. Chap. 2. *That there are some Spirits so Atheistical, and some so wholly possessed with a Spirit of Uncleanness, that they turn the most prudent and chaste Discourses into Dirt, and filthy Apprehensions; like Cholerick Stomachs, changing their very Cordials and Medicines into Bitterness, and in a literal sense turning the Grace of God into Wantonness. They study Cases of Conscience (as he proceeds) in the Case of Carnal Sins, not to avoid, but to learn ways how to offend God, and pollute their own Spirits, and search their Houses with a Sun-beam, that they may be instructed in all the corners of Nastiness.* Hence he cautions his Reader, as I beg leave to intreat of mine, that he will make a stop, and

not proceed to the following Advices, unless he be of a Chast Spirit, or desire to be Chast, or at least be apt to consider whether he ought or no.

And I doubt not but this shameful Corruption of Mankind, and the ill Use that is frequently made of the most serious and best-weighed Instructions, and Exhortations, that can be given, in relation to that Purity both of Heart and Life, which our Lord requires of his Disciples, has been a principal Cause of the Scarcity of Books upon this, above most other Moral Duties. It is not to be supposed, that either Preachers or Writers have had less Concern for the Promotion of Chastity, than of other Virtues; but only that they have been discouraged from the Consideration of it, by an Apprehension, that too many would be ready to pervert whatever should be proposed, though with all the tenderness and caution that might be, to a wrong Purpose.

Yet never was more need of Discourses of this nature than now, when Wickedness appears bare-fac'd, and too many are neither afraid nor ashamed to glory in it; as if it were a piece of Bravery, or a Jestling Matter, to bid Defiance to the Almighty, and daringly provoke him to his Face. When People come to this height of Impiety, it is high time to warn them of their excessive Folly and Danger, and to intreat and beseech them to bethink themselves in time, lest the Wrath of God break forth upon them, and there be no escaping. This is a dreadful Case, and may justly be expected

to bring down heavy Judgments upon a People, where these Iniquities prevail, to make their Land mourn, and the Inhabitants thereof languish, or possibly, as it fared with God's own chosen People the Jews, to let them be no more a Nation.

Were they only the common and more ordinary Sins of this kind, such as Adultery, Fornication, &c. that we have cause to complain of, these would miserably expose us to the terrible Indignation of the Almighty, and the dire Effects of it. But to our Sorrow and Shame it must be confess'd, that yet more grievous Abominations are found amongst us, such as our Country had only heard of in former Ages, but which make too sad a noise in this, to the Terror and Astonishment of all the Faithful in the Land. *Shall not the Lord visit for these things? Shall not his Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?*

Some Endeavours, blessed be God, have been used for preventing his impending Judgments, by a Prosecution and Punishment of Offenders in this kind. But, alas! unless others will take warning by these Proceedings, and will be reclaimed from their horrid Wickedness, there will still be too just reason to look upon our selves as in dangerous Circumstances. God's Hand already lies heavy upon us. A long and expensive War has very much exhausted our Stores; a decay of Trade has sadly lessened our Incomes; Parties and Divisions have set us at odds, and filled our Minds with Jealousies and Animo-

Animosities; the daily encrease of our Wants have multiplied Thievery, Violence, Extortion, and other Instances of Injustice; our Losses by Sea, and Disappointments by Land, call loudly upon us to attend to our Condition, to amend our Ways and our Doings, to humble our selves before God, and to sue to him for Mercy and Pardon, whereby to try if he will be intreated to *hear from Heaven, and forgive our Sins, and heal our Land.*

And to make us the more sensible of our Duty in this respect, I thought it might be useful to publish this Serious and Pious Discourse in our own Language, to caution Persons against the Sins here condemned, and excite and teach them how to get rid of them. And how were it possible for any to indulge themselves in these scandalous Immoralities, if they did well consider with themselves, how heinous a Sin *Uncleannefs* is, and what are the terrible Effects of it, how it defiles the Body, disturbs the Mind, ruins Mens Estates and Reputation here, and is the ready way to Everlasting Destruction hereafter?

How wretched and deplorable the State of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, and the Cities about them was, when they suffered the vengeance of *Eternal Fire*, as *St. Jude* speaks, *ver. 7th*, none can doubt. As neither can it be question'd whether their filthy and unnatural Lusts were the Occasion of so severe a Destruction. *They gave themselves up to vile Affections, to work those things which are unseemly, to the grossest and most enormous*

enormous Lewdnesses ; and though God bare with them for a time, he would not do it always, but at length allotted them that recompence of their Wickedness which it so loudly called for.

For, * *The Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah* * Gen. 19.
Brimstone and Fire from the Lord out of Heaven. ^{24, 25.}

And he overthrew those Cities, and all the Plain, and all the Inhabitants of the Cities, and that which grew upon the Ground, to such a degree, that they have ever since remained (a) lamentable Examples of the Divine Justice, for the Terror of all succeeding Generations. And can we hope to escape better than they, if their intolerable Wickedness be found amongst us? Our Blessed Saviour has taught us, That the Case of sinful Christians will be far worse than theirs at the Day of Judgment, St. *Matth.* xi. 20, &c. And I know not how any can promise themselves it shall not be so in the mean time too. I am sure that if this Vice, rarely heard of in these Parts till of late Years, be not rooted out from amongst us, it will forebode some heavy Vengeance to befall us, and God only knows how soon. *If we will not hearken and reform, but will walk thus contrary to the Lord, he will walk contrary to us in fury, and will chastise us yet seven times more for our Sins.*

This Crime, as one justly describes it, is in it self monstrous and unnatural, in its Practice filthy, and odious to extremity ; its Guilt is crying, and its Consequences ruinous. It de-

(a) Joseph. *l. 8. c. 1. 4.* c. 27. Tacit. *Hist. l. 5. p. 427.*
Ed. Lips. Solin. *Polyhist. c. 48.*

stroy's Conjugal Affection, perverts Natural Inclination, and tends to extinguish the hope of Posterity.

Another heinous Instance of Uncleanness, is *Adultery*; a complicated Wickedness, contrary to the exprefs Prohibition of Almighty God, in the VIIth Commandment, to the Doctrine of the Prophets, and to that of our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles in the New Testament, contrary to the Faith solemnly given at Marriage, contrary to the Intent of that holy Ordinance, contrary to Natural Justice, by the Damage done to the injur'd Party, and especially to the Husband, by a Spurious Issue, whereby himself and his Children are wrong'd, possibly his whole Estate, or at least a considerable, perhaps the greatest part of it, is swallowed up by a Stranger; and which is notoriously destructive of that mutual Affection Husband and Wife ought to have for, and that Comfort and Satisfaction they were designed to take in each other.

The very Heathens had such an abhorrence of this Sin, that they annexed divers severe Penalties to it. Sometimes (a) they allowed whomsoever that should take any in the Fact, to kill them; and (b) the Woman, if not killed, was to be exposed to the utmost Shame. Sometimes (c) the Husband might put the

(a) Heraclid. de Polit. apud. Ælian. var. Hist. p. 441.
 (b) Ib. p. 447. (c) A Gell. l. 10. c. 23.

Wife so taken to Death, or (d) might punish the Man in such a manner as effectually to prevent their coming together again, and (e) might most grievously torment him.

Among the Ancient Jews, (f) *Adultery* was punished with Death, and by God's own Appointment. And though in time they came not to have it in their power (g) to inflict Death upon Offenders against their Law, (a) they however decreed, and accordingly made use of, other severe Methods of handling Transgressors in this kind; whereby both to testifie their Detestation of this Vice, and to affright Persons from daring to venture upon it.

And amongst Christians, it has been reckoned so heinously offensive to Almighty God, that Divines have thought one single deliberate Act of it, equal in Guilt to a Habit of some lesser Sins. And our Author, in his Book of *the Causes of Corruption* (b), couples this Sin with Apostacy from Christianity, and affirms one single Act of it to put a Man out of a State of Salvation. *Tertullian* (c) represents it as worse than denying the Faith in times of

(d) Plant. Mil. Glorios. Act. 5. (e) Juv. Sat. 10. v. 315, 316. (f) Levit. 20. 10. (g) St. Jo. 18. 31.
 (a) Buxt. Synag. Jud. c. 47. (b) Il y a certains Pechez si atroces, comme l'Adultère, l'Apostasie, dans les quels il n'arrive gueres à un homme de tomber plus d'un fois, à moins qu'il ne soit tout-a-fait mechant; mais icy un seul de ces pechez est incompatible avec l'estat de regeneration. Par. 1. Sour. 4. p. 164. (c) Nemo volens negare compellitur, nemo nolens fornicatur: nulla ad libidinem vis est, nisi ipsa — Quis magis negavit, qui Christum vexatus, an qui delectatus amisit? Text. de Pudic. c. 22.

Persecution, because not extenuated by those Fears and Penalties that occasion such a Denial. And according to the Measures of the Primitive Discipline, (*d*) the Holy Communion was denied to Adulterers for Seven Years together, (*e*) sometimes much longer; and sometimes (*f*) they were never to be received into Communion, not even at the Point of Death.

And as to their Worldly Concerns, it is ordinarily seen, (*a*) that Adulterers suffer no small Inconvenience by their Lewd and Vicious manner of Life, but meet with all the several Mischiefs, and more than, I shall have occasion to mention under the next Head. So that the Wiseman had abundant reason upon this account for his Assertion, *Prov. vi. 32, 33.* that *Whoſoever committeth Adultery with a Woman, lacketh Underſtanding; he that doth it deſtroyeth his own Soul. A Wound and Diſhonour ſhall he get, and his Reproach ſhall not be wiped away.*

Fornication likewise is a Sin, not only abominable in the Sight of God, but hated also and abhorred by all wise and good Men; and that proves of very pernicious consequence in this present Life. It is not so injurious as this last named, and has not therefore altogether

(*d*) Albasp. Observat. l. 2. c. 17, 18. & Concil. Ancyr. Can. 20. (*e*) Greg. Nyss. Ep. ad Letorium. (*f*) B. Cypr. Ep. 55. ad Antonian.

(*a*) Οἱ ὅτι ἀπὸ Ἐπιμέλει καὶ διὰ τὴν καὶ μοιχεύουσιν, ὅτε ἀπέρχονται, τὴν μοιχεύειν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ νενομικέναι τὸ ἐξιδόναι. ποῦ δὲ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς κωλυτικῆς τῆς ἡθικῆς τὸ ἐξιδόναι μὴ τῇ τῇ μοιχεύειν ἡθικῇ, &c. Orig. con. Cels. l. 7. p. 374.

so many Difficulties and Dangers attending it ; but yet it opens a Door for so many dreadful Evils, as may well deterr all from it, who are not willing to run blindfold upon their own Destruction. It is frequently known to subject Persons to divers acute Pains and loathsome Diseases, to waste their Spirits, impair their Vitals, corrupt their Flesh, rot their Bones ; to deform themselves, consume their Estates, and *bring them to a morsel of Bread* ; is a great Reproach and Disgrace to them, causes many desperate Quarrels, and upon these and other-like accounts becomes a means of shortening their Days, and often-times of transmitting Poverty, and Shame, and an unhealthy Constitution to their Posterity. It makes Men soft and effeminate, and is full of Cares and Fears, and attended with Uneasiness and Discontent, Jealousy and Distrust, impatient Desires, and yet perplexing Delays and Disappointments ; and the End of it is ordinarily (a) Grief and Repentance. It puts its Vassals upon the vilest and most shameless Contrivances and Attempts, for compassing their Design, and satisfying their Lust. It keeps them (b) in perfect Slavery, and tempts them to live more like Beasts than Men. It renders them a Pest and Plague to their Neighbours, a Shame and

(a) Demosthenes Laidi, Ego, inquit, poenitere tanti non emo. Aul. Gel. l. i. c. 8.

(b) 'Ο ὃ πόνος ἀμαρτίας ἀδύνατον δ' ἔστι βόρβορον καὶ ἀγλὴν παρ' αὐτῆς τεταμένον, μολυσμᾷ συνάγει σωθόν, καὶ ἀκαθάρτον λειτουργεῖ ἐργασίαν. Greg. Nyss. Orat. cont. Fornicarios.

Affliction to their Relations, and irreconcilable Enemies to their own Welfare, whether with respect to the Quiet of their Minds, the Ease and Health of their Bodies, or the Success of their Affairs and Concerns in the World; all which are very often entirely ruined by it. And whatsoever good Qualities they may have otherwise, this one infamous ungovernable Appetite clouds and sadly obicures them all. It is a Sin that not only Christians have abundant reason to detest and renounce, but which divers in the Heathen World would rather die than yield to; as others also, when over-power'd, against their own Wills and utmost Endeavours to the contrary, would not suffer themselves to survive such Abuse. Of which there are many Instances, and St. *Jerom* mentions several of them * in his First Book against *Jovinian*.

Polygamy (a) is another branch of the Sin here condemned, as our Author well observes, *Part I. p. 11, 12.* which though sometimes practis'd among the *Jews*, is by no means lawful amongst Christians. Our Saviour declares it to be Adultery, for a Man to put away his Wife, and marry another, *St. Luke xvi. 18.* And it cannot be more consistent with the Doctrine and Laws of the Gospel, with the Na-

(a) Το ὅ ἐστιν ἀποδοῦναι τὴν γυναῖκα πατέρα καὶ μητέρα καὶ ἑσθαι ὡς ἓν. *Id. ad Letoium.*

ture and Ends of Matrimony, with the mutual Obligation then solemnly entred into, or with the Husband's Relation to his Wife, with whom he is pronounced * *one Flesh*, to take another * Ephes. 5. 31. without putting her away. All such Contracts therefore are no better than meer Delusions, whereby to deceive and quiet an uneasie Conscience, and do not prevent the Guilt of the Conversation consequent upon them. They are but another Species of Adultery, and are to be look'd upon and constantly avoided as such. There is a remarkable Note of the learned Dr. *Whitby* to this purpose, in his Commentary upon 1 Cor. vii. 4. *The Wife hath not power over her own Body, but the Husband; and likewise also the Husband hath not power of his own Body, but the Wife.* " Here (saith the Doctor) is a plain Argument against Polygamy; for if the Man hath not power over his own Body, he cannot give the power of it to another, and so cannot marry another; nor could the Wife, exclusively to him, have the power of his Body, if he could give it to another." In short, † God † Gen. 2. at first instituted Marriage between one Man 22. & and one Woman; and whatsoever Abuses had St. Matth. 19. 4. crept in afterwards in this respect our Saviour took care to rectifie, and restored it to its original Institution, so to remain to the World's end. And there is no going contrary to this, without offering apparent violence to God's own Appointment, and the Ends and Obligations of the former Marriage, and consequently

frequently (a) not without incurring the dreadful Guilt of Adultery.

Near of kin to Polygamy, is *Concubinage* *, and equally unlawful amongst Christians. Our Saviour gives no manner of Countenance to it in his Gospel. And his Apostle St. Paul forbids Uncleanness in such a manner, as to make *Marriage* and *Touching a Woman* equivalent Phrases, and to teach, That (b) *out of Marriage all is Sinful*. As our Author has fully shewn, *Part I. Sect. I. Ch. 5.*

Incest is another egregious Violation of the Laws of Chastity, and heinously provoking in the Sight of God. It was this cost *Amnon* his Life, 2 *Sam.* xiii. 22; and will be sure to bring down a far greater Destruction upon all that take not care to refrain from it. The Ignorant (c) *Persians* might more easily allow themselves in it; but Christians should be mindful that they are utterly inexcusable, if they have but an Inclination to, and Desire of it in their Heart.

And again, *Self-Pollution* is another Unnatural and Dangerous Species of *Uncleanness*.

(a) Divina Lex ita Duos in Matrimonium, quod est in corpus unum, pari jure conjungit, ut adulter habeatur, quisquis compagem corporis in diversa distraxerit. Laët. Instit. l. 6. c. 23.

* Concubina est mulier quæ consuetudinis, non matrimonii causâ retinetur, &c. Calv. Lexic. Jurid.

(b) Quisquis affectus illos frænare non potest, cohibeat eos intra præscriptum legitimi Tori, &c. Laët. Instit. c. 23.

(c) Πᾶσαι μὲν γὰρ ἐκ ἀποπονήσεως, συζαίει μὴ γυναικός. Diog. Laert. l. 9. in Vitâ Pyrrhōnis.

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This we see remarkably punish'd in *Onan*, by a particular Stroke from Almighty God. For it is not to be thought that his Guilt lay totally in not raising up Seed to his deceased Brother *Er*, though that was a very considerable Aggravation of it ; but the way he took to prevent it, would have been highly culpable at any other time. As it was, it proved so intolerable a Provocation, that Almighty God could not bear with it, and therefore immediately cut him off by reason of it : *Gen. xxxviii. 10. The thing which he did displeased the Lord, wherefore he slew him also.*

Nor, lastly, is the Duty of Chastity violated only by Lascivious and Impure Actions, but by *Filthy and Obscene Discourse*, which is not only a certain token of a corrupt Heart, but often-times proves an inducement to farther degrees of Wickedness, and is what no good Christian can possibly allow himself in ; And again, by *Lustful Thoughts and Desires*, which our Blessed Lord declares to be a lesser Instance of *Adultery*, and which are certainly very highly offensive to Almighty God, and no less dangerous to all who are chargeable with them ; *St. Matth. v. 28. Whosoever looketh upon a Woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her Already in his heart.*

There are some other Instances also of Wantonness and Impurity, which all Christians are concerned to beware of ; as the *Reader* will

see by the following Excellent *Discourse* (a), to which I referr him for them.

All I design farther, is only to offer some few other Arguments, in order to the Cure of this dangerous and shameful Vice.

And here I might begin with pressing Persons to reflect upon the many Mischiefs already noted as naturally consequent upon *Uncleanness*, even in this World, with respect to their Souls, Bodies, Reputation, Estates, and even their own Lives, and their Posterity after them. Which if seriously and attentively consider'd, will readily appear of that pernicious Influence, that every one must presently see, the gratifying a Brutish Affection can never be worth all this Misery. And here let not Persons delude themselves. They may possibly think to manage their Lewdness so, as to have the Pleasure they desire, without incurring the evil Consequents that so frequently attend it. But if ever they be so hardy as to make the Attempt, they will be in great danger of finding themselves grossly mistaken, and that these vain Hopes will fail them, and they will then see their Folly when 'tis too late. For when once Men allow themselves in any Lewd, Intemperate Course, daily Experience shews how it captivates their Understandings, and gets the Ascendant over their Wills, and carries them much farther than they ever intended, or had any apprehension of. When they have

(a) Especially Part I. Sect. 1. chap. 7.

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begun to give way to their vicious Inclinations, these are apt to grow upon them, and become more and more impetuous, and never to give over, till they have got the mastery over them; and then no one knows whither they will carry them. All their Resolutions of Prudence and Management are apt to fail them, and they quickly find, to their cost, how much wiser, and safer, and better upon all accompts it had been to have rejected the first Temptation to their Wickedness. For at best, this Vice usually carries Persons on, by degrees, till they are got beyond Recovery; but sometimes it is quicker in its Operation, and ruins them, and exposes their Vanity and Folly in a very little time. This our Blessed Saviour gives us a lively Representation of, in the Parable of the *Prodigal Son*, who having received his Portion from his Father, and probably a large one, went at a good distance, where his Father might have no knowledge of his Doings, and soon spent all, (a) ζῶν ἀσώτως, in Riotous Living, in great (b) Profuseness, (c) Lust, and (d) Intemperance. But then the Effect hereof was, that in a little time he brought himself into so distressed a Condition, that he was forced to undertake one of the meanest of Employments, to feed Swine; and,

(a) St. Luke 15. 13. (b) Ἐστὶ δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀσωτία καὶ ἡ ἀνελευ-
στερία καὶ χρήματα ὑπερβολαὶ καὶ ἐλλείψεις. Aristot. ad Nicom.
l. 4. c. 1. (c) Τὸς γὰρ ἀπρῆλεις καὶ εἰς ἀκολασίαν διαπαντὸς
ἀσώτως χαλῶμεν. Ibid. (d) Ἀσώτως, intemperanter,
Mald. in loc. Ἀσώτως, prodigaliter, intemperanter, libi-
dinosè, lascivè. Corn. à Lap.

which was worse, to want bare Necessaries for a Subsistence, and even (e) to wish that he might *fill his Belly with the Husks that the Swine did eat ; and yet no Man did give unto him.* This was the sad Effect of his Excess; and they that imitate him in his Vices, must expect the like uncomfortable Attendants upon them. Which one Consideration, one would think, were a sufficient Caution against a Lustful Course of Life, to all who are desirous of their own Welfare and Happiness in this World.

But this is incomparably the lesser part of what I have to urge against this Vice. For if we consider ourselves as Christians solemnly dedicated to God at Baptism, and who must be Judged by Him at the Last Day, these Meditations will plead much more strongly for an utter Abhorrence of it, and a constant Care never to come within the Verges of it; and particularly upon these following Accounts.

1. All *Uncleanness* is a palpable Violation of our Baptismal Covenant, wherein we solemnly obliged ourselves to renounce the Flesh, (that is to say, all Sensuality and Voluptuousness) aswell as the World and the Devil. For there is no living up to this Profession and Obligation, without being continually upon our guard against all those sinful Lusts which we have thus renounced. And indeed, what an Affront

(e) Ibid. v. 16.

is it to our Lord, and what vile Treachery and breach of Covenant, when Persons have thus given up their Names to Christ, and promised to obey his holy Laws, and, in particular, to abstain from all Impurity, if they shall yet draw back ; and professing to know God, shall in Works deny him, living in Wantonness and Unlawful Pleasures, like the Gentiles who knew him not, or rather in such detestable Lewdnesses as the wiser amongst these would have abominated ? We cannot doubt but that we are all strictly engaged to ** cleanse * 2 Cor. ourselves from all Filthiness both of Flesh 7. 1. and Spirit, and to perfect Holiness in the Fear of God.* And what a monstrous Incongruity must it be, for such to indulge themselves in any Carnal and Sensual Immoralities, in direct opposition to the Vow so solemnly made against them ! This must necessarily argue a great Stupidity and Regardlessness of their Duty ; which were sufficiently blameable in any, but in Christians who pretend to tread in their Saviour's Steps, and to obey all his Commandments, is most exceedingly provoking.

2. *Uncleanness* is a frequent Occasion of many other Sins. From what hath been said, it evidently appears to be heinously offensive in itself, without any of those aggravating Circumstances that often-times attend it, and enhance its Guilt. But it must needs seem much more so, when taken in conjunction with those other Sins which often-times flow

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from it, and are the unhappy Consequents of it: such as Profuseness, Lying, False Oaths, Quarrels, and Slaughter; some of which it makes use of for compassing its Designs, others for concealing them, and others upon the discovery of them. The Lustful Person breaks through all Impediments that lie in his way, to obstruct the Accomplishment of what he aims at. And tho' never so many Sins must be committed before he can bring his Ends about, he will very hardly suffer himself to be withheld by the fear of them. He will seek to deceive, will Protest, and Swear, and Vow, what he does not believe to be true, or never intends to perform; will Quarrel and Fight, and so venture the taking away another's Life, or losing his own. The like Methods he will be ready to flie to afterwards for hiding his Wickedness, sticking at no sort of indirect Means whereby to keep his Shame from being known. And if however he find himself mistaken, and his Sin is brought to light, and himself either reproached with it, or call'd in question about it, with what Lyes and Perjuries, what Subornation and False-Witness will he endeavour to justify himself? Besides that this Sin frequently tempts to the Murdering of Children thus brought into the World; and then again to the Practice of all the foremention'd Iniquities, in order to the concealment of this. And, oh! how egregiously heinous, how dreadfully dangerous, how exceedingly unbecoming the Christian Profession, and how intolerably

intolerably provoking in the Sight of God, must such a Mass of Wickedness be. A Sin that is big with so many others, and most of them of so flagitious a nature, calls upon all to be very watchful that they be not betrayed into it. I grant, all that commit this Sin, do not fall into all those others likewise: But since too many do, and none that indulge themselves in this, are sure they shall not, common Prudence would direct by all means to refrain from it. When *David* committed his Adultery with *Bathsheba*, it is not to be imagined that he had any Design upon *Uriah's* Life; and yet the taking away of this, prov'd to be the Event of it. So *Herod's* Familiarity with his Sister-in-Law *Herodias*, was the original Cause of *St. John Baptist's* being Beheaded. And whosoever once begins with this Sin, may certainly depend upon it, that he knows not when or where he shall end.

3. Another peculiar Aggravation of this Sin, above all others I know of, is, that most of the Instances of it are such wherein the Sinner cannot be wicked alone. Other Iniquities Men may commit by themselves; but here, for the most part, two must inevitably concur, and must be Partners of each other's Guilt, and must expect to suffer for it accordingly. *St. Paul* charges *Timothy*, Not to partake of other Men's Sins, but to keep himself pure, 1 Tim. v. 22. But in no case is such a Caution more needful, than in this before us; there being

no

no readier or fairer way to contract a share in another's Guilt, than by engaging them in the Lusts of Uncleanneſs. *Gregory Nyſſen* (a) obſerves of Rapine, Envy, Slander, and Murder, That they do not ſo affect the Doer, as him againſt whom they are levelled, or on whom they are acted. So that a Covetous Man may get what is another's, without loſing his own; and a Bloodthirſty Man may kill another, without hurting his own Body: but he that defiles another by Fornication, cannot poſſibly be undefiled himſelf. I add, That he cannot commit this Sin, without having both his own and the other's Crime to answer for; and therefore not without involving two Souls at one and the ſame time in the ſame Guilt and Ruine. And by conſequence, he is a deadly Enemy both to himſelf and his Accomplice, and, under a pretence of Kindneſs, expoſes both to dreadful and intolerable Evils both in this World, and in that which is to come.

Nor does he always ſtop here, but many times contrives Ways to draw in others beſides, either in order to the gaining the Conſent of the Accomplice, or helping to Opportunities for his Wickedneſs, or perhaps afterwards for aſſiſting in the making away with the Iſſue of it, or at leaſt in the concealment of ſuch Murder. In all which Caſes, he not only betrays all Perſons ſo employed into a

(a) De Fornicat. fugiend.

great measure of Guilt, but thereby likewise miserably encreases his own. And if this one Sin alone, without any such Aggravation, had been enough to ruine him beyond Recovery; how sad must his Case be, when he reflects, how much worse he has made it by this means, and how many others also he has brought into the like Ruine with himself? Certainly a Sin of thus destructive a nature, gives fair Warning to all that will in the least consider it, to flie from it with greater Aversion, than from a Lion or a Tyger, or whatsoever the most rapacious Beast of Prey.

4. *Uncleanness* has this peculiar Charge, against it, That the Apostle *St. Paul* declares it to be in an especial manner against our own Bodies. *Flee Fornication*, says the Apostle, *1 Cor. vi. 18. Every Sin that a Man doth is without the Body; But he that committeth Fornication sinneth against his own Body.* As much as to say, Other Sins pollute the Heart and the Soul; but all Sins of Impurity pollute the Body likewise. Other Sins are committed against God, or our Neighbour; but these against one's Self. They foul the Flesh, and contaminate the Body, which should be kept in Chastity and Purity, and, as the Apostle speaks, *ver. 19. as a Temple of the Holy-Ghost.* And how deplorable the State of such who yet indulge themselves in it will be, the same Apostle acquaints us, *1 Cor. iii. 17. If any Man defile the Temple of God, him will God destroy.*
The

The Wise-Man also assures us of him that *goeth after a strange Woman*, That he does it to his own Destruction : *As an Ox goeth to the Slaughter, as a Fool to the Correction of the Stocks, or as a Bird basleth to the Snare, and knoweth not that it is for its Life.* Often-times this Vice not only involves in it multitudes of other Evils, but exposes to Temporal Destruction and Death. But the greatest Infelicity and infinitely the worst it is or can be liable to, is that Eternal Death which follows upon it in the other World. *Him will God destroy* for ever and ever. And this Consideration therefore I have reserved for the last place.

5. This Vice leads to inevitable Destruction of both Body and Soul in Hell. It is the chief of those *Lusts of the Flesh* which the Scriptures so severely condemn, and so constantly dissuade from. Under what Character it went in the Old Testament, may be collected not only from the *VIIth Commandment*, and such other Prohibitions as those, *Deut. xxiii. 17. There shall be no Whore of the Daughters of Israel, nor a Sodomite of the Sons of Israel :* And *Levit. xviii. 20. Thou shalt not lie carnally with thy Neighbour's Wife, to defile thy self with her ;* but likewise from such Denunciations as that, *cap. xx. 10. The Man that committeth Adultery with another Man's Wife, even he that committeth Adultery with his Neighbour's Wife, the Adulterer and the Adulteress shall surely be put to death :* From such Expressions as those of the Wise-Man

Man, Prov. v. 3, 4, 5. *The Lips of a Strange Woman drop as an Honeycomb, and her Mouth is smoother than Oil. But her End is bitter as Wormwood, sharp as a two-edged Sword. Her Feet go down to Death; her Steps take hold on Hell.* And chap. vi. 24, 25, 26. *To keep thee from the Evil Woman, and the Flattery of the Tongue of a Strange Woman. Lust not after her Beauty in thine Heart; neither let her take thee with her Eyelids. For by means of a whorish Woman, a Man is brought to a piece of Bread, and the Adulterers will hunt for the precious Life.* Chap. xxii. 14. *The Mouth of a Strange Woman is a deep Pit; he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein.* And again, chap. xxiii. 27, 28. *A Whore is a deep Ditch; and a Strange Woman is a narrow Pit. She also lieth in wait for a Prey, and encreaseth the Transgressors among Men.* And Eccles. vii. 26. *I find more bitter than Death, the Woman whose Heart is Snares and Nets, and her Hands as Bands: whose pleaseth God shall escape from her, but the Sinner shall be taken by her.* And again, from such Expostulations and Reprehensions as those of the Prophets; *How shall I pardon thee for this? thy Children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no Gods: when I had fed them to the full, then they committed Adultery, and assembled by troops in the Harlots Houses. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; and shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?* Jer. v. 7, 9. And chap. vii. 9, 10. *Will ye Steal, Murder, and commit Adultery, &c. And*
come

come and stand before me in this House, which is called by my Name, and say we are delivered to do all these Abominations? And *Hos. iv. 1, 2, 3.* Hear the Word of the Lord, ye Children of Israel; for the Lord hath a Controversy with the Inhabitants of the Land, because there is no Truth, nor Mercy, nor Knowledge of God in the Land. By Swearing, and Lying, and Killing, and Stealing, and committing Adultery, they break out, and Blood toucheth Blood. Therefore shall the Land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the Beasts of the Field, and the Fowls of Heaven; yea, the Fishes of the Sea also shall be taken away. Where Adultery is manifestly one of those crying Sins, for which these heavy Judgments were to be brought upon the Land. And from this and the foremention'd Texts, together with others of the like nature, it is plain, that the Sin of *Uncleanness* was abundantly condemned, and caution'd against, amongst the Jews.

What Notion that faithful Servant of God, *Job*, had of it of old, we learn from himself, *Job xxxi. 1.* I made a Covenant with mine Eyes: Why then should I think upon a Maid? And a little after, *ver. 9, 10, 11, 12.* If mine Heart hath been deceived by a Woman, or if I have laid wait at my Neighbour's door; then let my Wife grind unto another, and let others bowe down upon her. For this is an heinous Crime; yea, it is an Iniquity to be punished by the Judges. Nor was any thing more common in the Old Testament, than for the Prophets to exclaim
against

against Idolatry, as Spiritual Whoredom; which we may be sure they would never have done, if that Carnal Whoredom, whereto they compared, it had not been look'd upon as a Crime of more than ordinary both Guilt and Danger; a Sin wherewith the Almighty will be highly incens'd, and for which He will not therefore fail to avenge himself proportionably upon the obstinate, impenitent Offenders.

And in the New Testament our Blessed Saviour reckons *Adultery* and *Fornication* amongst those Evils, which proceed from within, and defile a Man, St. Matth. xv. 19, 20. And know ye not, says his Apostle St. Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither Fornicators — nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind — shall inherit the Kingdom of God. And again, Gal. v. 19. The Works of the Flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, Fornication, Unclean-ness, Lasciviousness, &c. Of which, says the Apostle, ver. 21. I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. And again he speaks of it as a Truth all were fully satisfied of, That the Lustful and Unclean must never hope to reign with God, and our Blessed Saviour and Redeemer: Ephes. v. 5. This ye know, that no Whoremonger nor Unclean Person hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of God and of Christ. And again once more, Heb. xiii. 4. Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge:

judge : He will pass a severe Sentence upon such gross Offenders, and will never admit them to tast of the Heavenly Felicity.

* St. Mat.
25. 41.

But this is not all. Possibly they might esteem it no great Punishment to be kept out of Heaven, where they can never think to enjoy any of those brutish Satisfactions, which take up their Thoughts, and employ their Minds at present. And therefore they would do well seriously to attend to that other part of their Sentence, which will be * *to depart into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* This will be the doleful Fate of all impenitent Sinners, and of these therefore amongst the rest. As will be yet more apparent, if it be remembred that, *Rev. xxi. 8.* the *Abominable*, Ἐβδελυγμένοι, those that allow themselves in the grosser Acts of filthy Uncleanness, and *Whoremongers*, Πόρνοι, which includes both || Adulterers and Fornicators, are recorded amongst those who shall be condemned to the dismal fiery Lake, *the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone.*

|| St. Mat.
5. 32. &
19. 19.
compared with
1 Cor. 6.
10. &
Gal. 5.
19.

The Sum is, That this Vice of *Uncleanness* is an egregiously Wicked and Destructive Sin; a Sin that very often is attended with dreadful Consequents in this World, and brings Ruine and Misery to Persons Bodies and Souls, Relations and Posterity; and has several peculiar Aggravations that very much inhanse its Guilt, and so make it far the more intolerable in relation to a Future State. It is not only a manifest Breach of our Baptismal Vow, as all other

Wilful

wilful Sin is, but it is what in a particular manner is committed against our own Bodies, and besides is a common Occasion of bringing others in to partake of the like Wickedness. In most Instances there must be a Partner concern'd in it, and many times several others are prevail'd upon to be some way Abettors to it. And so it is highly instrumental, in order to both the present, and future, temporal and eternal Ruine of Mankind.

And now can there possibly be imagin'd any such Pleasure in it, as may countervail all these terribly pernicious Effects of it? Are all the Cares and Troubles, and all the Shame and Disgrace the Lustful Person brings upon himself here, the Pains and Diseases he contracts, the needless and extravagant Expences he runs himself into, the Poverty, the Streights and Wants whereto he is hereby reduced; are all these nothing, in comparison of the Satisfaction he enjoys in his Lewd and Dissolute manner of Life? Or rather, on the other hand, are they not such unaccountable Instances of Folly, as all Wise and Considerate Men are startled at, and have such an Aversion to, that nothing in the World can prevail with them to order their Lives accordingly? But then, in relation to another Life, the Mischief is infinitely greater, Nor can the most senseless Lunatick upon Earth act more inconsistently, than they do who abandon themselves to this Vice; and so for the gratification of a present unreasonable brutish Appetite, are sure to be intolerably, unconceivably, infinitely miserable to all Eternity,

Yet this is the certain State of all who live and die in this Sin. They for the most part render themselves very unhappy and wretched in this World; and in the World to come can hope for nothing better than Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, Pains and Tortures, and Blackness of Darkness, with the Devil and his Angels, for evermore.

* 2 Cor.
7. 1.

Wherefore the Result of these awakening Considerations should be, an unfeigned Love and Practice of the Virtue treated of in the latter Part of the following *Discourse*; that all who read them, be invited to hate the Garment spotted and defiled of the Flesh, and to *cleanse themselves* (as St. Paul exhorts) * *from all Filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God.* The Apostle St. Peter tells us, all *Fleshly Lusts war against the Soul*, 1 S. Pet. ii. 11. and thereby informs us of the Loveliness and Excellency, the Safety and Advantage of Chastity, which being diametrically opposite to those of Lust, must have a directly contrary tendency, and must naturally conduce to the Welfare and Happiness of all that have attained to it. It prevents the forementioned dreadful Evils, preserves us from living like Beasts in this World, and prepares us for the Enjoyment of Eternal Happiness in the other. And it is therefore well worth all the Care, and Watchfulness, and Mortification, and Prayer, and Fasting we can use for acquiring it where it is wanting, or preserving it where it is.

See what a high Esteem the Patriarch *Joseph* had of this Virtue, and how resolved he was,
not

not to part with it on any terms ! Whom, when a Captive in *Egypt*, neither his wanton Mistress, with all her own Charms, and most earnest Solicitations, nor all the additional Motives that either Hope or Fear might suggest, could invite to defile himself with her. She offered herself first, without putting him to the trouble of trying her ; and this when he was in the Heat and Vigour of Youth, and so the less likely to reject her Motion. And it was not a common Prostitute who thus accosted him, but a Woman of Credit and Reputation, as may be concluded from her Husband's readiness to believe her groundless Accusation of innocent *Joseph*, and to lay all the blame upon him. She was much his Superior in Quality, his Mistress, the Wife of *Potiphar*, an Officer of Character and Interest in *Pharaoh's* Court, and a Captain of his Guards. And whether Beautiful or not we cannot know, since the Scripture mentions nothing of it ; yet considering her Condition, it is reasonable to suppose her set off with all the outward Ornaments that Art or Nature could afford for rendring her Amiable and Inviting. It is possible also she might have tried other Methods of Enticing, as *Reuben* is made, (a) in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, to say she did. But it is much rather to be depended upon, that her Interest in her Husband might have been a likely means of advancing *Joseph* to a higher

(a) Καὶ ὅτι πολλὰ ἐποίησεν ἡ Αἰγυπτία, καὶ μέγας παρελάσας, καὶ ὁδομαχὴ αὐτῷ προσέθηκε. Grab. Spicileg. Patr. Sect. I. p. 149.

Station, had he condescended to comply with her. And no less, on the other hand, might it be presumed that his Denial would prove, as in Fact it did, very much to his Disadvantage, and, for ought he knew, would terminate in his utter Ruine. Especially considering the Distance he was at from his Native Country and Relations, being sold a Slave into *Egypt*, and so without that Countenance and Assistance he might otherwise have expected upon any causeless Accusation. Besides, this was not a single Attempt, but often and eagerly repeated, to try if he could any way be wrought upon, to hearken at one time, to what he had rejected at others. And, lastly, to compleat all her Stratagems, she had at length found out a convenient Opportunity, when they were both alone, and no body in the House to detect them, if he should comply, nor, on the other hand, to disprove her false Accusations upon his Refusal. Perhaps, never did more, and more inviting Circumstances concurr to set off a Temptation to the best advantage. And yet such an Apprehension had the religious Patriarch of this Sin, and he knew it to be so displeasing to Almighty God, and so dangerous to himself, that he remained immoveable as a Rock, under all the Solicitations he met with, resolutely repelling the Temptress with this short but unanswerable Expostulation; *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?* Gen. xxxix. 9. And ver. 12. as *She caught him by his Garment, saying, Lie with me*; rather than yield to her unreasonable and lustful Desire,

he

he left his Garment in her Hand, and fled, and got him out. A noble Example of a Soul that was above the transitory Pleasures and Enjoyments of this present World, or whatever might defeat his Hopes and Expectations in the other ! And no less convincing a Token is it of the clear Sense and Persuasion he had, that this was a grievous and a crying Sin, a Sin of a deep Dye, and whereby he should have been sure greatly to provoke Almighty God, and to bring down a severe Vengeance upon himself, if he had not kept upon his Guard against it.

What an intolerable Shame is it then for Christians, who have had Life and Immortality brought to light by the Gospel, have had their Duty, and the indispensable Obligation they are under to live in Purity and Holiness, fully displayed before them, and whom their Saviour has Redeemed with his own most Inestimable Blood : What an intolerable Shame, I say, is it for such not to retain a like invincible Reverence for *Chastity* ? This is no more than our Lord requires of all his Disciples, no more than we all make Profession of, no more than we have solemnly vow'd and covenanted to perform ; and without which we can never hope to be Sav'd.

For God's sake therefore, and for their own sakes, both Souls and Bodies, let all who name the Name of CHRIST be mindful to depart from all Iniquity, and in particular from all Impurity. *Without Holiness, there is no seeing God,* Heb. xii. 14. And this none can have any pretence to, who leads an immoral and vicious Life. And all such therefore are very nearly

concerned to bethink themselves, and to reform whatsoever is amiss in their Conversation ; and if they have indulged themselves in any sort of Uncleaness, a true Love, either of God or themselves, would direct them to recover themselves out of it with all the speed that may be.

It is related of the Philosopher *Democritus*, (a) That he put out his own Eyes, to avoid the Temptations of this Vice. This indeed is not required of Christians, but only to arm ourselves against those Temptations that either by the Sight, or any other way present themselves to our Minds ; that so whatsoever impure Inclinations arise at any time in our Hearts, may be immediately stifled, and may not be suffered to infect us, and draw us aside to the Satisfying of them. And if Persons will not do thus much to Save themselves, will not deny themselves, and mortifie the Flesh, and be continually upon their Watch, constantly and indefatigably begging also of God to assist their weak Endeavours, and preserve them in Chastity all their days, they must blame themselves only, if they be unhappy at present, and abundantly more so hereafter, to all Eternity.

(a) Tertul. Apol. c. 46. & Petav. de Rat. Temp. l. 3. c. 8.

The AUTHOR'S
PREFACE.

UNcleanness being a Shameful Sin, and of which it is troublesome to discourse, I was for a long time unsatisfied, before I could bring myself to resolve upon the Publication of this Work. I observ'd it very difficult to treat of a Subject of such a Nature, with all the Exactness that is necessary. And I doubt not but others besides me have been with-held from it by the same Consideration, and that this is the principal Reason why so little has been written against this Vice.

And yet perhaps there is no part of Christian Morality, whereupon there is more need of Writing than this. Uncleanness is one of those Vices that reign most generally. It cannot be denied, that there are amongst Chri-

The P R E F A C E.

stians a great Number of Persons, who abandon themselves to the greatest Excesses of this Sin, and to whom, what St. Paul affirmed of the Heathens, may fitly be applied, That being past feeling, they have given themselves up to all sorts of Pollution, Ephes. iv. 19. But howsoever there are very great and very frequent Scandals given this way, there is good reason to suppose that the Number of Offenders is much greater than it appears; inasmuch as they who commit this Sin, study all they can to conceal it, and often-times order the Matter so as no Man can make the least discovery of them. In short, There are Multitudes in the World, who, though free from the Crimes of Impurity, are yet possessed by the disorderly Passions of the Flesh, and defile themselves diverse Ways, by Actions and Desires contrary to Chastity. Whence it appears, that this Sin is very common, and that it is high time to oppose it.

But if a Man enquire, how it comes to pass, that this Vice reigns so in all Places? It must be owned, that one of the chief Causes of this Evil, is the scarcity of Instructions

The PREFACE.

Instructions and Assistance in relation to it. It is certain, that did Persons rightly understand the Heinousness of this Sin, and the Reasons there are for refraining from it, if they would seriously call to mind those admirable Precepts of Purity, and the powerful Motives to Chastity which are offered by the Gospel, if they would make use of those so effectual Means, which the Gospel affords for conquering the Desires of the Flesh, and living Continently and Holily, Uncleanness would be much rarer than it is. But Christians are not ordinarily sufficiently informed of this Matter. In Sermons, it is treated of only in General. And there are few Books relating to it, whereby to supply the want of Oral Instructions; insomuch that whilst there is plenty of wicked Books to promote Impurity, and the Number of them is every day encreasing, there is hardly any Tract to be met with for reclaiming Persons from so dangerous a Passion. This has been my long Observation, and has made me conclude, a Discourse against Uncleanness must needs be highly useful. I have also taken some Pains this way for divers Years, for the Edification of the Church

The PREFACE.

Church where I serve ; yet I have never resolved till now to publish my Thoughts upon this Subject.

One thing I must beg leave to advertise those who shall read this Treatise, and which I beseech them to have always before their Eyes ; and that is, That the Case is by no means the same with the Matter I am treating of, and other Points of Morality. For in handling other Topicks, a Man may safely say whatever he thinks any way advantageous to his Design, and has nothing to hinder him from rallying together whatever he apprehends necessary, and proposing his Arguments in their utmost extent and force, making them as plain as possible, and answering all Difficulties relating to them. But in arguing against Uncleanneſs, the same Liberty is not to be taken, but a Man is extremely confined, and is obliged to express himself with Circumspection and Caution, for fear of intrenching upon Modesty. For which Cause, I have not been able to press my Reasonings so home as were to have been wished, nor to enforce my Proofs with that degree of Evidence they might
other -

The PREFACE.

otherwise have had. Some Points should have been more enlarged upon, and some Objections more particularly considered; but this would have necessitated me to touch upon some things which Decency forbids. There are also divers things which I am obliged to express only in general Terms, others which I dare but just hint, and others again that I am forced totally to suppress. However, I make it my endeavour to supply this Defect, inevitable in a Work of this nature, by the Principles I lay down; and I intreat my Readers also to help it on their part by their Attention and Reflections.

And whereas this Book may come into the hands of divers who are guilty of the Sin here condemned, I earnestly beseech and conjure such to consider seriously what I advance; and that whilst they are reading it, they will duly reflect upon their own Case, and will disengage themselves from the Snares of Uncleanness whilst they may. I beg those also who have not incurred this Guilt, and more particularly the Younger sort of them, may make a good Use of what they meet

The PREFACE.

meet with here, and that it may be a Means of securing them against a Sin whose Consequences are so fatal, and which involves those that indulge themselves in it in the utmost Misfortunes.

THE

THE TABLE.

PART I.

Of UNCLEANNESS.

SECT. I. **T**hat Uncleannefs is a Sin, *Pag. 1*

- Chap. I. *Confiderations from Nature,* *ibid.*
Chap. II. *Proofs taken from the Old Testament,* *16*
Chap. III. *Some General Observations from the New Testament,* *22*
Chap. IV. *Some General Reflections upon thofe Passages of the New Testament, which refpect Uncleannefs,* *26*
Chap. V. *A Particular Enquiry into thofe feveral Paffages, where Uncleannefs is forbidden,* *33*
Chap. VI. *Of Adultery,* *49*
Chap. VII. *Of the other Species of Uncleannefs,* *60*

SECT. II. Of the Effects of Uncleannefs, *75*

- Chap. I. *The State to which People are brought by Uncleannefs,* *ibid.*
Chap. II. *Of the Sins which accompany Uncleannefs,* *84*
Chap. III. *Of the Evils and Punifhments confequent upon Uncleannefs,* *93*

SECT. III. Of the Causes of Uncleannefs, *100*

- Chap. I. *The First Cause, Ignorance,* *ibid.*
Chap. II. *The Second Cause, Bad Education,* *104*
Chap. III.

The TABLE.

Chap. III. <i>The Third Cause, The Way of Living,</i>	Pag. 109
Chap. IV. <i>The Fourth Cause, Ill Books,</i>	121
Chap. V. <i>The Fifth Cause, Impunity,</i>	124

SECT. IV. <i>An Answer to the Excuses for Uncleaness,</i>	131
---	-----

SECT. V. <i>The Duties of Offenders in this kind,</i>	141
---	-----

Chap. I. <i>The First Duty, Sorrow for their Sin,</i>	142
Chap. II. <i>The Second Duty, Confession,</i>	146
Chap. III. <i>The Third Duty, A Reparation of the Evil,</i>	156
Chap. IV. <i>The Fourth Duty, Conversion,</i>	163

P A R T II.

Of C H A S T I T Y.

SECT. I. <i>Of the Nature of Chastity,</i>	173
--	-----

Chap. I. <i>Of Chastity in General,</i>	174
Chap. II. <i>The First Branch of Chastity, With respect to what is Forbidden,</i>	175
Chap. III. <i>The Second Branch of Chastity, With respect to what is Lawful,</i>	181

SECT. II. <i>Of the Motives to Chastity,</i>	188
--	-----

Chap. I. <i>The First Motive, The Nature of the Virtue,</i>	189
Chap. II. <i>The Second Motive, The Divine Will,</i>	194
Chap. III. <i>The Third Motive, The Presence of God,</i>	196
Chap. IV. <i>The Fourth Motive, The Life and Sufferings of our Blessed Saviour,</i>	200
Chap. V. <i>The Fifth Motive, Our own Glorious State,</i>	203
Chap. VI.	

The TABLE.

Chap. VI. <i>The Sixth Motive, Death,</i>	Pag. 208
Chap. VII. <i>The Seventh Motive, The Resurrection,</i>	211
Chap. VIII. <i>The Eighth Motive, The Last Judgment,</i>	215
Chap. IX. <i>The Ninth Motive, Hell Torments,</i>	219
Chap. X. <i>The Tenth Motive, The Happiness of the Life to come,</i>	225

SECT. III. Of the Means to be used in order to Chastity, 232

Chap. I. <i>That there are Means of being Chast, and that this Virtue is attainable by their Help,</i>	ibid.
Chap. II. <i>What is to be done in order to Chastity, and first of Holy Exercises,</i>	235
Chap. III. <i>Care to be taken for avoiding Temptations,</i>	243
Chap. IV. <i>Care to be taken with respect to the Body,</i>	248
Chap. V. <i>The Cares which relate to the Soul,</i>	256
Chap. VI. <i>What is to be done when under Temptations,</i>	260
Chap. VII. <i>The Assistance that may be had from others, in order to Chastity,</i>	265
Chap. VIII. <i>Directions concerning the Use of these Means,</i>	271

Hieronymus adversus Jovinianum, lib. I.

Periclitamur Responsionis verecundiâ ; & quasi inter duos scopulos, & quasdam necessitatis & pudicitie Συμπληγάδες, hinc atque inde vel pudoris vel causæ naufragium sustinemus. Si ad proposita respondeamus, pudore suffundimur. Si pudor imperârit silentium, quasi de loco videmur cedere, & adversario ferendi causam dare. Melius est tamen, clausis, quod dicitur, oculis, Andabatarum more pugnare, quàm directâ spicula clypeo non repellere Veritatis.

ERRATA.

Page xxii. Line 2. read *others*; p. 16. l. 1. r. *The*; p. 18. l. 35. for *will* r. *would*; p. 24. l. 12. r. *Superscription*; p. 47. l. 37. r. *that*; p. 71. l. 32. r. *Ascendent*; p. 84. l. 7. r. *of his*; p. 96. l. 25. r. *Effects*; p. 129. l. 7. dele *where*; p. 153. l. 21. for *themselves* r. *him*; p. 154. l. 2. for *I say*, r. *I answer*; l. 15. r. *spiritual*; p. 177. l. 37. r. *Objects*; p. 189. l. 23. r. *any one*; p. 190. l. 10. after *governs* add (,) a Comma; p. 220. l. 10. r. *that*; p. 249. l. 24 & 25. dele *to*; p. 253. l. ult. r. *ἀγωνίζομαι*; p. 261. l. 32. r. *Sicknesses*; p. 264. l. 13. r. *Assistance*; p. 270. l. 13. dele *as*.

Species of it which may at any time be con- sidered in point of its being a sin. And re- cally there are two different ways to discover whether any thing be sinful; the one, when it is condemned by the King of Nature and Reason; the other, when it is forbidden by those laws which are given to mankind. And thus each of these that Uncleaness is so, and there- fore strictly speaking, what Nature and Reason require to endure in, what Nature and Reason require to endure in, what Nature and Reason require to endure in.

DISCOURSE
CONCERNING
UNCLEANNESS

And in behalf of

CHASTITY.

PART I.
Of Uncleaness.

SECT. I.

That Uncleaness is a Sin.

IT being necessary in the beginning of this Treatise to shew that Uncleaness is a Sin, I shall therefore apply my self in the first place to prove this concerning Uncleaness in general, in the second place with respect to Adultery, and thirdly with regard to those other

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Species

Species of it which may at any time be committed, in Deed, in Word, or in Thought. And because there are two different Ways to discover, whether any thing be sinful; the one, when it is condemn'd by the Light of Nature and Reason; the other, when it is forbidden by those Laws which Almighty God has delivered to Mankind in his written Word: I shall make it appear from each of these, that Uncleannefs is so, and therefore utterly unlawful. And to this end it will be requisite to enquire first, what Nature and Right Reason teach as to this Point, and then what is the Doctrine of Scripture concerning it.

CH A P. I.

Considerations from Nature.

THough the Proofs that may be alledged from the holy Scriptures are enough to perswade all such as own the Truth of the Christian Religion, and are abundantly more cogent and convincing, than any that can be brought from the Dictates of Nature, it will however be most proper to begin with these latter, whereby to make it evident that what Revelation teaches concerning Uncleannefs, has an exact Agreement with Right Reason. And here divers Reflections readily present themselves, which to all that shall calmly and impartially consider them, will appear highly just, admirably well suiting with the Nature of Man, and manifestly tending to the Good of Society.

I. This therefore I lay down as a Principle, That Mankind ought to have some Rule in their
Search

Search after, and Usage of whatsoever is pleasing to Flesh and Sense, and that we are not always to attend to our own Passions, and follow their Motions. For every one must necessarily acknowledge, either that we ought all to be left entirely to our own Management, or else that we must have some Rules given us for the better Government of our Lives. If it be pretended that we are to be left to our selves, this is to degrade us into the Rank of Beasts, which, for want of Reason to direct them better, blindly and imperiously pursue their own natural Instinct. And this were in truth a meer brutish Notion, unworthy of a Rational Creature, and which would go a great way towards abolishing all that is wont to be stiled either Vice or Virtue. Even the Nature of Man shews that he ought to regulate his Desires, and that all things are not permitted and allowed him. His own Reason and Judgment will enable him to discover what is for his own Advantage, and to distinguish what he is to do, and what to refrain from. Besides that he has it in his Power to keep under his Passions, his Constitution being such, that they cannot carry him aside without his own Concurrence, but he finds it in his own Choice, either to follow, or resist them; and that by consequence he is bound to make a right use of his discerning Faculties, and the Power that God has given him. Nor can any deliver themselves up to the Government of their Passions, without infinite Mischief to themselves, and occasioning all sorts of Disorder in the World, and producing much greater Confusion amongst Men than is to be seen in the very Brutes, which being determined by a secret Instinct, are hereby contained within their certain Bounds, and never arrive at the Excesses of those Persons, who inordinately abuse their Reason and Phancy, to search

and find out means of satisfying their unreasonable Passions, and are continually under the sole Conduct of their own extravagant Humour. But this is more especially to be feared, in respect to the Lust of Uncleanness, as being a Passion that is too often observed, to hurry People on to the foulest Extravagances. Whence it clearly follows, that we are not left entirely to our own Liberty, but that Care must be taken to govern and regulate our Desires, and keep them within their proper Limits.

And if you would know what are the proper Limits and Rules to be observed in this Case, do but seriously consider a while with your selves, and you will presently be convinced, that there is no more effectual Remedy to be prescribed than Marriage. No other sure Direction can be given besides this, nor any so proper means of ordering things aright, and preventing the terrible Effects of Incontinence. Take away this one Barrier, and let Allowance be given to Impurity, and immediately there will be an end of all Rule and Order. Nothing would be able to put a stop to the Licentiousness and Extravagances that would hereby break in upon us, but all other Bounds that might be fixed would forthwith be broken down. Wherefore the true and only Means of regulating Mankind, and maintaining an innocent Conversation amongst them, is to restrain them by Marriage, and leave them subject in other respects to the Laws of Chastity: As will farther appear by what follows.

II. My second Argument shall be taken from the Advantages and Excellence of Marriage. On which whensoever we seriously and attentively fix our Meditations, we cannot sufficiently admire the Wisdom of our great Creator, in the Provision he has thus made for the Preservation of Man-

Ch. 1. *Considerations from Nature.*

5

Mankind. And accordingly it might administer occasion for divers Reflections, That Almighty God, who could have peopled the World, by only commanding Men to be, as he did our first Parent *Adam*, would choose rather to have them propagated by the ordinary way of Generation; and to that end created them at the beginning both Male and Female, and ordained a strict Union between them. But it not being to my purpose to enter at present upon these several Considerations, I shall content my self only to observe, That this was a sensible Demonstration, that the Almighty would take this Method, to lay a sure Foundation of Society, and the Happiness of Mankind. It is plain he design'd hereby to establish a most intimate Union of Parents betwixt themselves, and with their Children; and that the Ordinance of Marriage is the best way to promote the Happiness of Families, and by consequence of larger Societies. This State was requisite for the Good of Mankind, for their mutual Comfort and Satisfaction, for the Education of Children, and for the Preservation of Order and Quiet in the World. Moreover the Laws of Marriage, at least very often, prevent their having Children as long as they live, and in too great Numbers, each of which would be a great Obstruction to their good Education. Neither, were it not for this, would People be so concern'd, as they now ordinarily shew themselves to be, for the Good of the Publick and for Posterity. It ought also to be consider'd, That seeing Men are endued with Reason, and have a Sense of Virtue, it is therefore of great Importance to them to choose such a State of Life as may repress the Violence of a most dangerous Passion, and which has most mischievous Consequences attending it; which State can be no other than that

of Matrimony. All these Considerations, together with several other that might be added to them, make it very clear, that Marriage is an Institution most beneficial to Mankind, and every way worthy of the immense Goodness, and infinite Wisdom of God. And that it is an Ordinance every way suitable to the Nature of Man, and of absolute Necessity, appears from this, That it has been every where received, and its Necessity has been so much the more freely own'd, and its Laws so much the more carefully obey'd, by how much the better instructed, and the more civilized any People have been.

But now Uncleanness has a necessary Tendency to subvert this so happy Institution, and so singularly advantageous to Mankind. Inasmuch that if this Vice were once look'd upon as an indifferent matter, many Persons would not marry at all, because of some Troubles and Inconveniences that are incident to the Married State; and even the greatest Part of those that should marry, would neither be able to live in Unity, Satisfaction, and Peace, nor would love their Children, nor take that Care of them, which is incumbent upon all Parents. So that where-soever Lust prevails to the Contempt of Marriage, (which, as I have already observed, is a most necessary Ordinance, in order to the Welfare of Mankind, and is the Foundation of all Societies) seeing it hereby dissolves the Bonds and Relations, that are wont to unite Persons most firmly to each other, it is manifestly wicked and unlawful, and would be a means of introducing all sorts of Crimes, and Mischiefs into the World. In short, as there is no Harm in keeping to the Laws of Marriage, and observing them exactly, this being only to live conformably to Reason and Virtue; so, on the other hand, the Evils arising from

Ch. 1. *Considerations from Nature.*

7

from the Abolition of these Laws, and the Allowance of inordinate Lusts would be unavoidable and endless.

III. Uncleaness is contrary to the most inviolable Laws of Justice, and that Order which must be preserved in Society. For if there be any one Principle of natural Justice that is certain and indisputable, it is this, That every one should be allowed a Subsistence; and especially that Children are to be provided for and brought up. To doubt of this is to shew our selves unnatural and worse than Beasts. Children we all know are born in a very feeble Condition, and have for a long time such need of Support, that were they left to themselves, they must all be lost. And hence it is most highly necessary, that there should be some others to take care of them. But of whom can this be required? Nature it self teaches that there are none under such Obligation to it, as those who brought them into the World. The Milk wherewith Mothers are naturally furnished, testifies them to be in an especial manner determin'd by the Law of the Creator, to suckle their little ones. Nor are the Fathers less concerned to take care of them. Neither can the Mothers make due Provision for their Maintenance and Education, without the Father's Assistance.

But then to the end that both Fathers and Mothers may apply themselves to nourish and bring up their Children, it is requisite they should know them, and that their Birth should be such as they may securely depend upon; besides the divers weighty Reasons there are, why this should likewise be known in the Society whereinto they are born. Parents ought too after this to have a natural Tenderness and Affection to their Children, whereby to incline them to the greater care of them. This Love is a principal, and original

Cauſe, not only of all the Good that Fathers do to their Children, but alſo of innumerable other matters, moſt beneficial to Society, in which Men now engage, but which they would never engage in, if a paternal Kindneſs did not put them upon it. Again, it is moſt proper for Fathers and Mothers to live together, that they may jointly take care of their Children, and may have them near at hand upon all occaſions. Moreover they ſhould have Time and Means for nourishing and breeding them up; upon which account it would be very inconvenient to have them in too great number. All this is perfectly agreeable to Reaſon and Juſtice; but withal I muſt add, That all this can never be effected any other way than by Marriage.

The Permiſſion of Uncleanneſs would ſubvert theſe natural, and neceſſary Laws. Fathers would frequently not know their own Offspring; and would have no means of being aſſured that any of them were really their own. And both Fathers and Mothers would be at a loſs as to the Method of bringing them up; partly for want of being Members of the ſame Family, and ſo not living together with them; partly becauſe there would be too many for them; and again for other Reaſons eaſily diſcernible. Uncleanneſs has a conſiderable Influence upon Paternal Affection, and if it doth not wholly extinguiſh it, it however greatly weakens it; and tempts both Parents, but more eſpecially the Fathers, to abandon their Children, and ſo as much as in them lies to become their Murderers. And ſo the Conſequence would be, that their Children being neglected and ill educated, would not only become unhappy during their whole Lives, but would cauſe a thouſand Diſorders to the Publick. If any one deſire to be ſatiſfied, that theſe would be

be the natural Effects of Uncleanneſs, he need only recollect how it ſar'd among the Heathens, with whom this Vice was ſo cuſtomary. In ſome places their Infants were expoſed, as ſoon as born, and vaſt Numbers of them periſhed. In ſome places Parents looked upon themſelves as having a Right of putting them to death. And others ſold them; which was one Cauſe of the prodigious Multitudes of Slaves, that were in thoſe times. All theſe horrible Enormities, which Chriſtian Religion has extirpated out of the World, would immediately return, if Impurity were again taken for an indifferent matter.

I know not what can be replied to theſe Aſſertions, unleſs it be, That in truth theſe Diſorders would be found, if Men entirely abandoned themſelves to Senſuality; but that no ſuch Miſchiefs are to be feared, ſo long as they contain themſelves within certain Rules. But here I demand again; What Rules and Bounds ſhould they have ſet them? And how could theſe forementioned Inconveniencies be prevented, otherwiſe than by the Help of Marriage? Poſſibly it may be ſaid, Children might be nourished and brought up, though not born in Marriage, provided thoſe, who brought them into the World, would agree together to take care of them. Whereto I anſwer firſt, Howſoever ſome might do this, it will be impoſſible to expect that all ſhould; as is eaſy to infer from what has been already ſaid. I ſay further, That theſe People could never be ſo well aſſured of the Condition and Birth of their Children; nor would find themſelves under ſuch powerful Obligations to love them, as in Marriage. And yet once more; Either it is pretended that thoſe Fathers and Mothers, who ſhould have enter'd into Compact, to take care of their Children, might be again diſcharged of their Obligation,

tion, to the intent they might place their Care upon others, or it is not pretended. If it be admitted that they ought to be discharged, this were to open a Passage for all those same Mischiefs, which I have been just now mentioning, to break in upon us. If it be said, they may not be released, and that they must remain faithful to each other, I affirm that they have hereby in a manner subjected themselves to the Laws of Marriage. And so those who have recourse to this kind of Evasion, confirm, instead of confuting, the Truth I have been maintaining, returning to the Institution of Matrimony before they are aware of it; and without considering where they are, they acknowledge the Reasonableness and Necessity of it.

IV. If it be a true and natural Principle, that Parents are to love their Children, and take care of them, is is no whit less reasonable for Children to love and honour those from whom they have received their Life, to obey them, to comfort them, and to assist them in time of Age, of Sickness, or of Want. These have always been esteem'd sacred and inviolable Duties. But as little as People think of it, it is very apparent, that if Uncleanness were allow'd of, Children would not know how to answer their Obligation in these Points. An infinite Number of them would not so much as know their own Fathers, not to say that they would not dwell in the same Neighbourhood with them. They would not be sensible of the same Motives to love and assist them. Nor would they at all take themselves to be under the same Obligations with those, who being born in Marriage, pass generally the better part of their Lives together with their Fathers and Mothers, and are indebted to them for the chief part of whatsoever Advantages they

they enjoy, and have frequent occasion of making Returns to them upon account of what they are thus indebted for.

V. Another Consideration which shews how Men are naturally obliged to keep to the Laws of Marriage, and to abstain from all Uncleanness, is the Proportion that is ordinarily observable between the two Sexes. Which being a powerful Argument against Polygamy, and all kind of Uncleanness, it therefore deserves to be the more particularly attended to. The Holy Scripture informs us that God created at the first one Man and one Woman. And daily Experience shews that the same Method is still continued amongst all that are born into the World. It is not one of the least surprizing Instances of Providence, that such an Equality is preserved in relation to the two Sexes, that their Number is yet alike, and there are to this Day as many Men as Women; The Fact is certain; Enquiry has been made, and it has been found that there is very little difference betwixt the Births of both Sexes; and that if at any time there have been born a few more Men than Women, or a few more Women than Men, the Disparity has proved so small as not to be worth speaking of. And he must put out his Eyes, who will not see that this Proportion and Equality is the Effect of an admirable Wisdom, and could not have been so ordered but by a particular Providence. And hence it clearly follows, That the Author of Nature has determined to provide for the Preservation of Mankind by the help of Marriage; and that Marriage is to be, not of one Husband with many Wives, nor of one Woman with many Husbands, but of One and One. And so it is easily to be observed, That Uncleanness is inconsistent with this Order of Nature, and that Proportion there is between
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the two Sexes, and that the only allowable Course in this Case is Marriage. Nor is there any departing from this Rule, so plainly marked out by Nature, without introducing a thousand dreadful Extravagances, and Mens falling into Adultery, and other more abominable Crimes not fit to be named: As is to be seen wheresoever Polygamy, and other Instances of Uncleanness prevail.

There is no room for pleading upon this Occasion, That a great many Men are taken off by War; because our present Business is to observe things as they are in their own Natural State. Our Blessed Saviour *Jesus Christ* has taught us, in the nineteenth Chapter of *St. Matthew*, that without regarding the Irregularities which the Corruptions of Men may have introduced in relation to Marriage, recourse must be had to the first beginning of things, and the Creator's Original Institution must be kept to: Which I am sure is a Doctrine no Christian can possibly dispute; and which besides is exactly agreeable to Reason. God did not make Men to destroy one another. Nor can it ever be proved that Men may make new Laws to themselves, may change that Order which God had established at the beginning, and may wander from those Rules which even Nature has appointed, under pretence, that through the Wickedness of Men, at some certain times, and in some certain places Wars have arisen, and other Disturbances, contrary to the Order of Nature. Many other Considerations might farther be added upon this Subject, were it necessary; but what has been already said is enough to satisfy any reasonable Man.

VI. It is a good Proof of any Duty's being consonant to the Law of Nature, if it can be shewn that Mankind have in all Ages given their Judgment in favour of it. But now if it be asked,

asked, What Sentiments the World has ever had concerning this Sin of Uncleanness, these two Particulars can no way be denied.

First, That even amongst the Pagans this Vice could not pass without a Note of Infamy and Disgrace. It is ordinarily taken for granted, that they looked upon Fornication as of an indifferent nature, and that it was accordingly allow'd amongst them. But this cannot be affirmed of all without distinction, as if there were none of them who had not this Notion of it. There is no doubt to be made but many of them were of this Opinion, as appears from the Writings of several of their own Authors. And who knows not that their Practice was accordingly, and that these Idolatrous People were extreamly lascivious, and addicted to the gratifying their Lusts? And it is no great matter of Surprize that they were so, considering the state of Ignorance and Corruption in which they lived, upon all other accounts. Yet it is not true that Uncleanness was generally reputed indifferent amongst them; it being very unjust to fix the Opinions of some licentious Poets upon them, as the common Sentiment of them all. There is no Difficulty at all in proving from the Testimony of their own Writers, that not only Adultery, but simple Fornication too, went under the Character of a wicked Practice, and no way reconcileable to Honour and Virtue. This is evident from the Sayings of divers of their wisser Authors, from the Laws that from time to time were made amongst them in favour of Marriage, from what some of them have written of Modesty and Decency of Behaviour, from the Praises they gave to these Virtues, from divers very remarkable Examples of Chastity and Continence which occur in their Histories, from the ill Opinion they shew'd themselves to have of the Incontinent,

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from the Care such took to conceal their Miscarriages of this nature, and from several other Considerations. They accounted it a great Mark of Reproach for unmarried Persons to be thus familiar with each other. So that I cannot see how it can be said that the Generality of the Heathens imagin'd Fornication to be naturally so very indifferent, as many have supposed concerning them. Almighty God, who wou'd not suffer the Principles of Religion and Virtue to be utterly extinguished amongst these poor ignorant People, preserved some Notion of Chastity in them, as well as of divers other Duties.

The *Second* thing which I desire to be consider'd in behalf of what I have asserted, is, the Sense of Shame and Modesty that so naturally appears in all who are not become more like Brutes than Men, and the Reservedness whereto it invites them. I grant Education has a great Influence upon Persons, and makes them more or less circumspect as to the manner of their Conversation, and some have attained to such a Measure of Assurance, that Bashfulness and Modesty make very faint Impressions upon them, and indeed are almost entirely banished from amongst them. But then, there are possibly no Men in the World, who have not some small Remainers of Shame and Modesty left in them. Yet granting any such can be found, it will by no means follow from hence that Modesty and Chastity are only an empty Name, and that no regard is to be had to them. There are some People and Countries, where Robbery passes with Impunity, where Fathers expose, abandon, and sell their Children, where Man's Flesh is fed upon, and where no notice is taken of those several Laws of Justice, which other Nations esteem inviolable, and whereon depends the Happiness and Peace of all Civil Society.

ciety. Is this a Reason therefore to conclude that these Laws are surely arbitrary, and not rather of perpetual Obligation? It is no less than the utmost height of Folly, to judge of the nature of things, and particularly to conclude what is Just and Unjust, by the Notions of the most brutish of all Mankind; and so pretend to govern the World by the Sentiments of the lesser Part, and who make the vilest Figure in it, and have in a manner divested themselves of their Reason and Humanity. And common Prudence therefore would direct on the contrary, in this as well as all other Cases, to prefer the general Consent of such as strictly follow the Dictates of their Reason. Now it is always to be observed, that the more cultivated any People are, and the more improved in their Understanding, they feel themselves under the more indissoluble Obligation, from the Laws of Decency and an inoffensive Conversation.

And no wonder therefore that we see the Apostles of our Lord in their Writings combating Uncleanneſs with this ſame Argument taken from the known Neceſſity of a modeſt and reſerv'd Deportment. St. Paul affirms, *Ephes. 5. 12.* that *It is a ſhame to ſpeak of thoſe things which the Heathens did in ſecret.* And *Chap. 4. 19.* that *Being paſt feeling, hardened in their Wickedneſs, and ſo not ſenſible of the Evil of their doings, they had given themſelves over unto Laſciviousneſs, to work all Uncleanneſs with Greedineſs.* This Feeling therefore or Senſe, which the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of, can be none other, than the Senſe of Modeſty and Shame, which many among the Gentiles had almoſt totally loſt.

I conclude then from the Reasons hitherto propoſed, That if we conſult only the Light of Nature and Right Reason, this alone will ſupply us with conſiderable Arguments againſt Uncleanneſs,

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the Evil of which Vice I proceed next to shew from the Holy Scriptures. And I shall begin with those Proofs of it which we meet with in the Old Testament; and afterwards shall descend to those which we cannot but observe in the New.

CHAP. II.

Proofs taken from the Old Testament.

1. **T**HE first Proof that the Books of the Old Testament afford to our purpose, is the Institution of Marriage. And though I have already observed it, I must in this place again take notice that the sacred Writings teach this Estate to have been established by God †, at the first beginning of the World. And being thus of Divine Institution, it ought to be accounted so much the more inviolable and sacred. And that it was instituted immediately upon the Creation, is a very good Evidence that the Almighty did not design Mankind to be preserved, and the World to be peopled any other way than by Marriage. In saying that *the Man should cleave to his Wife, and they two should be one Flesh*, he lets us see it was by no means his Intention that Persons should go astray from this Law, and abandon themselves to Sensuality and Incontinence. No, his Design was to confine them to a certain Order, and certain Rules. It is also to be remember'd that Marriage was instituted before the Fall; and if it were needful in the state of Innocency, it is much more so now that Man's corrupt and sinful Nature is so sadly prone to Sensuality and all kind of Wickedness; and whose Condition now more
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† Gen.
2. 24.

especially calls for Restraint and Government. I add, that God has enacted divers particular Statutes, for rendring this first Institution yet more inviolable; Marriage being one of those things, about which God gave the *Jews* the greatest number of Injunctions. And by consequence whatsoever is contrary to the Institution of Matrimony, is unlawful.

It may perhaps be objected that Polygamy and Divorce were common among the *Jews*, which shews they were not strictly tied to the Laws of Marriage, as is pretended. But to this our Blessed Saviour returns answer, † That these Irregularities were tolerated amongst that People, not because Almighty God approved of them, but only by reason of *the Hardness of their Hearts*. As to Divorce he declares, that as it was used amongst them, it was contrary to God's first Institution, and *at the beginning it was not so*, and neither should it be for the future, but things should be resetled amongst his Disciples, in their own Original Estate, wherein they ought to be, and as God had of old appointed them at the time of the Creation. Thus you see that Jesus Christ has not given new Laws concerning Marriage, but those which the Gospel imposes are precisely the same with those that had been before ordained from the beginning of the World.

2. But this is not all: For there are divers Passages in the Books of *Moses*, where Uncleanness is plainly condemned. God commands, *Deut. 23. 17.* that there be *no Whore of the House of Israel, nor a Whoremonger of the Sons of Israel*. It is true the chief Design of this Law was to prevent their having any Prostitutes among them, as there had been amongst the Idolatrous Nations. Nevertheless it may fairly be concluded from hence, that Uncleanness in general is forbidden, and that

† St. Mat.
19. 8, 9.

Fornication is undoubtedly a Sin ; becauſe if this were allowed of, it will be hard to give a good Reaſon, why Proſtitution ſhould be a Crime. It is certain likewiſe that God gave this Law becauſe of the Danger the *Iſraelites* were in of being tempted to commit Idolatry, by means of Uncleanneſs, leſt they ſhould follow the Example of the Idolatrous Nations, with whom Proſtitution was wont to accompany the Service of their Idols. But this was not the only Reaſon of the Law. And that God condemned Impurity not only when joined with Proſtitution and Idolatry, but becauſe it is evil in its Nature, appears, beſides what has been already ſaid to prove it, becauſe he forbids it, out of the Caſe of Proſtitution, and where there is no Danger of Idolatry. As will be ſhewn more fully in the Sequel of this Diſcourſe.

3. Levit. 21. 9. *The Daughter of any Priest, if ſhe profane her ſelf by playing the whore, ſhe profaneth her Father, ſhe ſhall be burnt with fire.* This Law particularly relates to the *Priest's Daughters*, in as much as other Women were not obnoxious to the ſame Penalty. And there are theſe two Reaſons why it does ſo. The one, becauſe God requires a ſingular Degree of Purity in the Miniſters of Religion, and that whatſoever relates to them ſhould be holy. The other, becauſe God would ſecure the Family of the *Prieſts*, and the Places of Divine Service, from any ſuch Abominations as were too uſual in the Idol-Temples, and in the Families of the Idolatrous *Prieſts*. But ſtill this Law ſuppoſes that Fornication is a Sin. For not to inſiſt upon it, that it is not conceivable that God will have threatned the Penalty of Death for what had no where been forbidden, and which was of an indifferent nature, the Terms of the Law, and the Reaſon God aſſigns of it, deſerve

to be seriously attended to. God commands the Priest's Daughter that shall be convict of Uncleanness, in whatsoever manner she shall have committed it, and though she have never been chargeable with either Prostitution, or Idolatry, to be put to death. And the Reason he gives of this Law is, *because this Daughter is both defiled her self, and has dishonoured her Father*; which implies that Fornication is both a Defilement, a thing unseemly and wicked in its self, and by Consequence that this is not one of those positive Laws, which are founded only on the good Pleasure of God.

4. Which Doctrine is farther confirm'd by God's not only condemning Incontinence in the Priests Daughters, but in all other Women too. He decrees, *Deut. 22. 19.* That if a Man accused a Woman whom he had espoused, of having misbehaved her self before her Marriage, he should be obliged in case he did it wrongfully, to pay a Sum of Money to her Father. And pray observe the Reason of this Appointment, *Because he has brought an evil Report upon a Virgin of Israel*, as much as to say, he has disgrac'd her by charging her with so infamous a Fault. Where it is manifestly supposed, that Uncleanness, without Prostitution and Idolatry, is a matter of Infamy and Guilt. But if the Husband could make good his Charge against her, the Woman was forthwith stoned at her own Father's Door. No doubt God Almighty order'd this Punishment to be inflicted, because of the Injury hereby done to the Husband. But then it is to be noted, That had she in reality done no Evil, and her simple Fornication were no Sin, the Husband would have had no just Cause of Complaint against her, because she had then done nothing but what she lawfully might do. And if this were the Case, it is not to

be conceived, that God would have subjected her to so severe a Punishment. And it cannot therefore be questioned but the Women against whom this Law was made, were guilty of Sin. The Terms of the Law are very express, *v. 20. She shall be stoned because she hath wrought Folly in Israel, to play the whore in her Father's house*; and so are an undeniable Condemnation of simple Fornication. For here is not a word of Uncleanness as accompanied with Prostitution or Idolatry, or as it is committed by a Person already betrothed, but only of a Woman not yet betrothed, and in her Father's House, who has fallen into Sin there, and possibly but into one Act of it. The Sin thus committed, you see, is called Fornication, and Folly, and is said to be shameful, and not fit to be seen in *Israel*. Which shews that this Law and all others which God has enacted against Incontinence, suppose the Baseness and Sinfulness of it. It is clear that God would have all who are unmarried to live chastly, and that all who did otherwise acted contrary to that Virtue and Holiness, which he had required of the People of *Israel*. And yet there is one Circumstance more to be observed, That Offenders against this Law were to be *stoned at their Father's Door*. Which being some sort of Punishment to their Fathers, would lay an Obligation upon them to attend the more carefully to the Conduct of their Children: Which is one of those Arguments I might have taken occasion to enlarge upon, but that my present Design will not admit of it.

5. In the same Chapter, *v. 28, 29*. God commands that whosoever should have abused a *Damsel that was a Virgin*, should pay a Sum of Money to her Father, and should be made to marry her, *whom he had humbled, defiled, and disgraced*. Which could not be, unless Impurity were disgraceful

graceful and opprobrious. And here it is especially to be noted, That that Man should never be at liberty to put away the Woman whom he had thus disgraced.

6. There are several particular Laws in the Books of *Moses* relating to Uncleanneſs, and which were intended to keep the *Jews* at a diſtance, not only from this Sin, but from all Approaches to it; and ſo to diſpoſe them to Purity and Chaſtity. By which Laws we are taught that it is not only the groſſer Act that deſiles, but there are divers Tendencies to it that in ſome degree produce the ſame effect. *Moses* ſpeaks of divers Species of Pollution, all which the *Jews* were commanded to beware of, and for which ſeveral ſorts of Purifications were preſcribed. But ſeeing theſe Laws are ſuch as I cannot well recite in this place, and cannot therefore make my Obſervations upon, I only point at them in two Words, though I might draw very forcible Arguments from them to prove that God's Deſign in them was to oblige the *Jews* to live in Purity.

7. Laſtly, It is paſt doubt that the Sin we are now treating of always paſſed amongſt the *Jews* for unlawful; as might be evinced from many hiſtorical Occurrences in the Old Teſtament, too long to be here recited, but which fully prove that they conſtantly affixed a Note of Infamy upon it. This appears alſo by the Writings of *Joſephus* and *Philo*, both which ſpeak ſo honourably of *Moses's* Law, and particularly with regard to Chaſtity and Continence. I might alſo alledge to this purpoſe divers Paſſages of the *Rabbis*, and divers Laws and Cuſtoms of that Nation, obliging the younger ſort to Chaſtity, and particularly directing the young Women to be retired, and live in great Purity. But this would be too tedious a Task. And I think it enough to have alledged the

the Principal of those Proofs which the Old Testament furnishes us with upon this Subject.

If now we pass on to the New Testament, this will give yet more Light to the Cause in hand. Both the Gospels and the Epistles contain such clear Instructions, and so many and such express Laws against Uncleanness, that it is impossible for such who believe these sacred Writings, and read them with any manner of Attention, to retain the least Doubt of it. I shall first mention some general Considerations, before I proceed to those others which are more particular.

C H A P. III.

Some General Observations from the New Testament.

I Shall first propose some General Considerations arising from the Christian Doctrine and Religion, to let you see with what singular Care and Diligence all ought to watch against this Sin.

1. Now it is certain the Gospel does not less insist upon this Point than the Law; and seeing Christians have received a far greater measure of Light and Grace than the *Jews*, they are to be so much the more cautious of all Defilement of this nature. Wherefore having already seen that the Law of *Moses* formally condemns all Uncleanness, and as well in Single as Married Persons, and enjoins Chastity to all sorts of People, there is no pretending that the contrary Liberty is not prohibited to all Christians. It is much less excusable in us; For notwithstanding God required an unfeigned

feigned Holiness of the *Jews*, and permitted them no Lusts of the Flesh, there were some Irregularities however tolerated amongst them. But *Jesus Christ* † has declared, as has already been noted, † S. Matt. 19. 8, 9. that it should not be so in the Christian Church, and that his Disciples should hold themselves obliged, inviolably to observe the strictest Laws of Chastity, and more particularly those which had been enacted in respect to Marriage, immediately upon the Creation of the World. And here the Reader may please to observe after what manner our Blessed Lord explains that Commandment; *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*, St. *Matth.* 5. 27, 28. and how much farther he carries the Doctrine of Chastity than had been usual with the Jewish Doctors. Whereby he plainly gives us to understand, that his Purpose was to oblige his Followers to a singular degree of Chastity, and that if the contrary Practices were forbidden under the Jewish Law, they are now much more so under the Gospel.

2. This first Consideration will appear of the more force, if we take notice in the next place, that the Gospel condemns whatever tends to promote Sensuality and the Gratification of the Flesh, and ties the Heart too close to the World and its Enjoyments. This is the true Spirit of the Gospel, and the principal Aim of the Christian Religion. The great and prime Lesson of our Saviour is † to † S. Matt. 16. 24. *deny our selves and * all worldly Lusts*. And as ever * Tit. 2. 12. any would advance in Piety and the Love of God, they must be sure to mortify their Carnal Inclinations, to keep under their Bodies, and get the Mastery over their unreasonable and unruly Passions. It is St. *John's* Assertion, that † If any Man † Ep. 2. 15. *love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him*. And among those things which incline the Heart to the World, and obstruct the Love of God, this

* v. 16.

Apostle names in the first place * *the Lust of the Flesh*; because this Passion is most common, and most violent, and Men are wont to be fondest of Corporal Pleasures. The Motions of this Passion are so powerful in those who have not duly labour'd to subdue it, its Enticements are so bewitching, its Returns so frequent, that those who indulge it quickly become its Slaves, and it banishes the Love of God from their Hearts, together with the Desire of Spiritual and Heavenly things. This is the Reason that they who are addicted to sensual Pleasures, are not in a condition to taste of those Spiritual Joys which Religion and Piety set before them; or to delight themselves with the Love of God, and Communion with him. For this Cause the Gospel so effectually recommends Temperance, and requires to be modest in the Desire and Use of lawful things, and enjoins Abstinence, Fasting, and Mortification. Which is much more than simply forbidding the Sins of Impurity. All these Doctrines aim at rendring us Chast and Pure, to prevent our giving up our selves to the Love of the Creatures, and becoming Slaves to Pleasure. And they are of absolute necessity, to keep us from being seduced by the Flesh, and to beget the Love of God in us, and put us upon seeking after the Joys of Heaven. This is the Foundation, and the Epitomy of all Christian Morality. And he that has throughly learned these Principles, will easily perceive, that if there be any Duty necessary in Religion, it is Chastity; and if there be any Passion against which Christians are diligently to guard themselves, it is Uncleanness.

3. And this brings me to a Third General Consideration, and which is uncontestable. It is that the Purity to which Christians are called by the Gospel is so extensive, as to reach even to their Words,

Words, to their Looks, and to their Thoughts. They are to *see all Appearance of Evil*, and whatsoever may expose them to it; are to repress the first Motions of Lust, and to mortify their own Inclinations even in relation to things in their own Nature Allowable and Indifferent. All these Duties are undoubtedly established, by the Declarations of our Lord and his Apostles. And can any now in the least question what Character Uncleanliness deserves? Is it possible that Fornication can be thought no Sin in a Christian, when an obscene Word is so, when a bare Cast of the Eye attended with a lustful Desire is by no means to be excused, when it is a Sin to cherish and encourage impure Thoughts in the Mind, when there may be Sin in the Use of Lawful things? Had People rightly understood these Maxims, had they well considered the Spirit of the Gospel, and the Genius of the Christian Religion, there would have been no need to insist upon these Truths, or to be put to the trouble of proving Uncleanliness to be a Sin. But the Generality live in a shameful and stupid Ignorance in this respect; and have no tolerable Notion of Holiness and Christian Perfection. And so there is no reason to be surpris'd at their having such loose Sentiments concerning Uncleanliness.

4. When the Gospel enjoins Chastity, it enjoins it to all sorts of Persons, and in all Conditions. As may be observed throughout the New Testament. St. James says the true Religion, and which alone renders us acceptable in the sight of God, *† is to keep our selves pure and unspotted from the* † S. Ja. 1. *World.* And St. Paul, speaking of the Lust of Uncleanliness, expressly affirms * this to be *the Will of* * 1 Thess. *God, even our Sanctification, that ye should abstain* 4. 3. 4. *from Fornication, and that every one of us should know how to possess his Vessel in Sanctification and Honour.* Which

Which Words plainly teach Chastity to be a General Duty. All Men have their own Body, and all ought to keep it pure, and consequently Chastity ought to be the study of all whether Married, or Unmarried. Which is a sufficient Proof that Uncleanness is forbidden to such as are not yet engaged in Marriage. St. Paul says they ought to preserve their Body in Purity and Holiness. And after this it is very absurd to pretend that Uncleanness never becomes a Crime till it arrives at Adultery, or an entire abandoning oneself to all Pollution.

But what we have yet farther to add will set this Truth in its full Light, and will make it abundantly evident, that St. Paul design'd nothing less than to condemn all Impurity of whatsoever kind.

CHAP. IV.

Some General Reflexions upon those Passages of the New Testament, which respect Uncleanness.

NOW we should pass on to some more Particular Considerations, and express and formal Proofs; but that it will be proper before we mention the Passages to be hereafter insisted upon, to make some reflexion in the first place, upon the Terms wherein this Sin is described; secondly, upon the Apostles manner of speaking of it; and then, thirdly, upon the Reasons they had to express themselves in this manner.

I. And

I. And first it is to be observed that the Apostles not only condemn Impurity in general, but distinguish also the several sorts of this Sin, as Adultery, Fornication or Whoring, and other Sins not necessary to be mentioned here. This Distinction is to be seen throughout the New Testament; as *Heb. 13. 4. Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*; and *1 Cor. 6. 9. Neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor the Abominable shall inherit the Kingdom of God*. St. Paul in this latter Passage specifies several different Sins; and proposes Adultery and Fornication, as two distinct Species of Impurity. He puts a difference between Fornicators and Adulterers, as well as between these and the Abominable, Idolaters, Drunkards, and other grievous Sinners.

The signification of the Word Adultery is what every body knows. None but can tell that it imports a Violation of the Marriage Covenant, And those called Fornicators or Whoremongers, are such as defile themselves in an Unmarried State.

And it is to be remember'd, the Apostles did not invent new Terms, or new Names, for Vices or Virtues, but made use of those which were in common use, and whose Meaning all could understand. For instance, when they spake of Drunkenness, or Covetousness, no body that heard them but immediately knew what they intended. In like manner common Usage had taught all, whether Jews or Gentiles, what Fornication and Whoring meant. The Pagan Authors had delivered themselves in the same Terms the Apostles did. It is true they had made use of them in different Senses; † sometimes for either Impurity at large, or for Adultery, and again at other times

† Πορνεία, Scottatio, μοιχεία.

for Impurity committed out of Marriage, and even simple Fornication *. And who then can doubt whether the Apostles condemned this Species of Uncleanness, especially when they distinguish it from Adultery? However, this will be made yet more clear by a particular Enquiry into divers Passages, which can bear no other Sense than this.

II. Let us consider therefore what the Apostles say of Uncleanness. And there are two very particular Instances relating to it in the New Testament that call for our Attention. The former is that the holy Writers treat oftener of this than of any other Sin. Let any Man examine all the places in the New Testament, where mention is made of Vices and Sins, and he will find there is not any one other Crime so many times named as Uncleanness. The other Particular to be remarked, and which is peculiar to this Sin, is, that the Apostles ordinarily name it first, and in their Catalogues of Vices set it in the Front of all the rest. This is a clear Case. † One need only run over the New Testament to be convinced of it. And the Reader will see it made out in the Remainder of this Chapter. Whence it appears very clearly, that Uncleanness is one of the principal Sins that the Apostles set themselves to oppose; and that all Christians are under a particular Obligation to renounce it.

III. The Apostles having shewn such an Aver-
sion to this Sin, it may justly be concluded that they had very good and substantial Reasons for their so doing; which it will not be amiss to relate in this place.

* In this Sense Lucian us'd the Word, *Μεμολοχέναι* Fabulos. Dial. 21. *Καὶ τὸν πρὸς μεμολοχέναι διηγεῖται ἀντίον*, &c.

† See S. Mar. 7. 21. Rom. 1. 26, &c. 1 Cor. 5. 11. & 6. 10. Gal. 5. 19. Coloss. 3. 5, &c.

1. The first is the Strength of this Passion, and the Inclination Mankind have to whatsoever is pleasing to Flesh and Sense. This Inclination was one of the first and most fatal Effects, of that Change, and Corruption which our first Parent *Adam's* Sin occasioned in his Posterity; and so makes it necessary to be the more carefully upon our Guard, against the Sin I am now discoursing of.

2. This Sin reigned amongst the Heathens; who lived in Pollution, and all sorts of Dissoluteness, and a Habit of indulging their own unruly Desires, and by this means gave occasion to the Apostles to represent them, as a People who had prostituted themselves to all Lasciviousness. And this in truth is the Character the Apostles chiefly give of them. † God, says St. Paul, gave them up † Rom. 1. to their own vile Affections, and to Uncleanneſs through 24. 26. the Lusts of their own Hearts. And a little after, * they were filled with all Unrighteousness, Fornication, * v. 29. and Wickedness. He says at another time, † that † Eph. 4. being past Feeling, they gave themselves over to commit 19. all Uncleanneſs with greedineſs. Thus St. Peter testifies of those Idolaters, that they were so commonly used to live in Uncleanneſs, * that they * 1 S. Pet. were surprized at the Christians Refusal to run 4. 3. with them into the same Excess of Rior, or Dissoluteness. This being the Case with these Pagans, the Apostles who wrote either to such of them as were newly converted to Christianity, or to the Jews who lived amongst them, found it necessary to set themselves particularly against Impurity.

3. There was a third Reason for them to speak often with great Freedom against this Sin; a peculiar Reason, and which related to those Times in which the Apostles lived; and it was the Cause they had to fear lest the Practice of it should be

a means of drawing the Christians aside into Idolatry and Apostacy. And since this gives a great light to the whole matter in hand, and helps to the understanding of a great many Texts in the Holy Scripture, where Uncleanness is spoken of, I shall beg leave somewhat to enlarge upon it.

We must know then that this Vice was not only very common amongst the Heathens, as is shewn in the preceding Article; but moreover was made in some sort a part of their Religion, and the Worship they paid to their false Deities. And no wonder, considering what impure Objects they had for their Adoration. Such as *Jupiter*, and *Venus* or *Astarte*, the Goddesses of Lust. Impurity was annexed to the Worship of Idols; and it was a natural Consequent of the Feasts, Sacrifices, and Revellings, which they kept in honour of their suppos'd Deities. Till at length it came to pass, that this Wickedness was committed in the Places dedicated to the Service of their Idols, and these Places were filled with infamous Persons. Which Custom obtained in so many distant places, and grew so Publick, that Prostitution came to be a sort of Consecration. And this is the reason why the Prostitutes were anciently called by the same

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Name with those that were † Consecrated. Heathen Authors will furnish us with plenty of Proofs and Examples to this purpose. And some are to be met with in the Holy Scripture. This also

* See Exod. 34. 15.
Deut. 23. 18, &c.

gave occasion for * divers Laws which occur in the Books of *Moses*. It is observed in the History of the *Israelites*, that Idolatry was often introduced by the assistance of Uncleanness. *Moses* reports, *Numb.* 25. 1, 2. 3. that the Children of *Israel*, being led by the Daughters of the Idolatrous *Moabites*, to their Feasts, and the Sacrifices of their Gods, they were seduced through the Whore-

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*dom they had committed with them, and they did eat, and bowed down to their Gods. It was through this Lust that Solomon † fell into Idolatry. In whose † 1 Kings, Son Rehoboam's days the People also corrupted 11. 4. themselves, and forsook the Service of the true God. And it is expressly recorded of them, that at this time, * there were Sodomites in the Land, and * 1 Kings, they did according to all the Abominations of the Na- 14. 22, 23. tions which the Lord had cast out before them. And 24. the Author of the History of the Maccabees giving an Account how the Temple had been prophaned by Antiochus, tells amongst other things || that the || 2 Macc. Gentiles had filled the Temple with Riot, and Revelling, 6. 4. and they dallied with Harlots, within the Circuit of the holy places.*

This Pagan Dissoluteness reigned also in the Times of the Apostles. And it was so much the more to be feared that the Converts to Christianity would be seduced by this bait, in that besides the usual Inclination Men have to Sensuality, these new Christians, either were gained from the Pagans who had lived a long time in these Abominations, before their Conversion, or from the Jews who lived among these Pagans. The Apostles therefore set themselves principally against this Vice, not only because it is a heinous Sin in it self, and diametrically opposite to that Holiness which the Gospel requires, but because of the Danger the Christians were in, of relapsing into Idolatry. And for this Reason it is, that * Idol- * 1 Cor. 6. latry is so frequently joined with Uncleaness, as 10. well as with Drunkenness and Gluttony. De- 1 S. Pet. 4. bauchery and Intemperance accompany'd the Hea- 3. &c. thens Worship. And the Christians being invited to the Entertainments and Rejoicings which were made at the end of the Sacrifices which had been offered to Idols, might easily fall into Idolatry, unless they set themselves to avoid these Occa- sions,

sions, by living soberly and chafly. St. Paul makes this very evident, 1 Cor. 10. 6, 7, 8. Where to caution the Christians againft affifting at the Idolatrous Feasts, he propounds to them the Example of the *Israelites*, whom the *Moabitish Women* had drawn into Idolatry. Now *these things*, says he, *were our Examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. Neither be ye Idolaters, as were some of them, as it is written, The People sat down to eat and drink, namely in the Idol-Temples, and rose up to play, to commit Wantonness and Lewdness.*

To conclude this Point, the History of the Primitive Church reaches, That the *Nicolaitans*, the *Gnosticks*, and other such like Hereticks which arose at that time, were for introducing all at once both Fornication and Idolatry. As any one may read in the second Chapter of St. *John's Revelation*; or the second Chapter of the second Epistle of St. *Peter*.

This is one of the Reasons the Apostles had to speak so often against Uncleannefs; but yet it is neither the only one, nor the most considerable. They condemned this Sin not only upon account of the Danger of Idolatry, but for other Reasons too taken from the Nature of this Vice. As is our Business next to shew, in a more particular Discussion of the principal Places of the New Testament, where Impurity is treated of; and whence it will evidently appear, that not only an Indulging our selves in this infamous Sin is here forbidden, but that simple Fornication is condemned.

C H A P. V.

A Particular Enquiry into those several Passages, where Uncleanneſs is forbidden.

THose Words of our Blessed Saviour, *St. Mar. 7. 21.* call for our serious Attention. *From within, out of the Heart proceed Evil Thoughts, Adulteries, Fornications, Murders, &c.* After which he adds, *Ver. 23. All these evil things come from within, and defile the Man.* In these Words our Lord does not name Adultery only, but Fornication likewise, and distinguishes them from one another. But what says he of this latter Sin? It is plain he puts it in the Rank of things evil in their own nature. For his Design in this Chapter is to distinguish between Evil and Indifferent things, between what pollutes a Man, and what does not. He lets us see the Pharisees were deceived in thinking they should be defiled by eating with unwashen Hands, according to the Tradition of the *Jews*. He tells them this is not that which defiles a Man, and renders him blame-worthy, but that which comes from within the Heart, namely Adulteries and Fornications. He says expressly that these are wicked, or evil in their own nature, and so render a Man impure. This Passage shews also that our Saviour reckons Uncleanneſs in the same rank with Robbery, and Murder, and other heinous Crimes, which all the World owns to be naturally evil. So that after this so expreſs Declaration of our Saviour Christ, it cannot be doubted but Uncleanneſs is a Sin, and indeed a great Sin.

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It will not be besides our purpose in this place to enquire into that Law which we have recorded, *Acts* 15. 28, 29. in these Words. *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things, that ye abstain from Meats offered to Idols, and from Blood, and from things strangled, and from Fornication.* For the right understanding of which Law, it is to be observ'd, That it related to those who from among the Heathens were converted to the Christian Religion; as appears by the whole Chapter, and more particularly by the Inscription of that Letter of the Apostles, whereof this Decree is a Part. It was at that time a Subject of Debate, Whether those Pagans that took upon them the Profession of Christianity were bound to be circumcised, and observe the other Ceremonial Ordinances of *Moses*. And the Apostles being assembled to decide this Question, pronounce it not necessary for the Gentiles to subject themselves to Circumcision nor the Ceremonies of the Law. But yet they held it requisite to forbid them *Meats offered to Idols, Blood, things strangled, and Fornication.* Of all the Ceremonial Laws the Apostles impose none upon the Gentile Converts, except such as related to things offered in Sacrifice to Idols, Blood, and things strangled; which also were forbidden in the seventeenth Chapter of *Leviticus*.

The Apostles would have the Gentiles abstain from these things for the same reason for which God had formerly forbidden them to the *Jews*; that is to say, the more effectually to secure them from Idolatry. The Truth is, these were Idolatrous and Superstitious Customs of the Heathens, and Rites which accompanied their false Worship, as divers Authors have testified very fully. It therefore concern'd the Apostles at this time, to forbid the Christians to eat of such Food, as had been

been offered to Idols, of Blood, and of things strangled, because in eating of these they incurred the Danger of falling into Idolatry; and moreover because they might hereby scandalize either their Brethren, or perhaps the *Jews*. Touching which matter whosoever pleases may consult the eighth Chapter of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. At the same time the Apostles forbid Impurity, in conjunction with these Meats offered to Idols, Blood, and things strangled; because, as has been said, it was one Consequent of the Worship of false Gods, and of the Idol Feasts.

If what I have been discoursing be well understood, and due Attention be given to the Design and Spirit of this Apostolical Canon, and the Reasons whereupon it is grounded, there will be no difficulty in apprehending how the Apostles came to join Impurity with things indifferent in their own nature. They did it upon the account of these Usages being joined to, and as it were inseparable from the Heathen Worship. I confess there is a great difference between Uncleanneſs and such Meats as the Apostles here forbid to be eaten. These Meats are not evil in themselves; nor were the Christians required at that time to abstain from them, but only for fear of being betray'd into Idolatry, or of giving Scandal. In other Cases, where was no such appearance of Danger, the use of these things might be permitted. So saith St. Paul in the eighth and tenth Chapters of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, in regard to things sacrificed to Idols. But Uncleanneſs is in its own Nature unlawful, it *defiles a Man*, and Christians are under a Necessity of shunning it; and not only for the Causes mentioned in relation to the Meats here forbidden; but for other Reasons, taken from the nature of the Sin it self, and the Turpitude of it. This is plain from

the foregoing Considerations, and the Passages I have cited, and those others I have yet to add.

The Apostle St. Paul gives this Advice, *Rom. 13. 13. Let us walk honestly as in the day time, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, or Uncleanness and Lasciviousness.* Here the Apostle reflects upon the Debaucheries and infamous Familiarities of the Pagans, and speaks of them as inconsistent with a regular and orderly Conversation, and every way unworthy of such as enjoy the Light of the Gospel.

The first Epistle to the *Corinthians* contains divers Passages very express to this purpose; particularly in its fifth, sixth, and seventh Chapters.

In the fifth Chapter St. Paul very earnestly exhorts not only to fly Uncleanness, but those too that were guilty of it. He would have People separate from these, and cast them out of the Church. From whence it is easy to judge, in what Detestation Impurity is to be had amongst Christians. *I wrote to you, says he, in an Epistle, and Now have I written unto you, not to company with Fornicators, ver. 9. 11.* He would have them excommunicated; and puts them in the Front of those Sinners, that ought not to be suffered in the Church. So it follows, *If any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or an Idolater, &c. with such an one eat not, ver. 11. and ver. 13. Put away from among your selves that wicked Person.*

In the sixth Chapter he insists farther upon the same Subject, but after somewhat a more particular manner. Here he makes it the peculiar Matter of his Discourse; he argues concerning it, and sets himself purposely to prove that Uncleanness is highly criminal in a Christian; he offers Variety of Reasons, and several Considerations, so as he is not wont to do when treating of other Vices. This course he takes, because he found it neces-

necessary to convince the *Corinthians* of the Dreadfulness of this Sin.

He tells them, *ver. 10.* that *Neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor the Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, &c. shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* In which Declaration he includes all sorts of Unclean Persons, whether Adulterers or Fornicators, or those that defile themselves in any other manner, and subjects them all to the same Condemnation with those that committed the foulest Crimes, of being excluded from the Kingdom of God. Then he represents to these *Corinthians*, *ver. 11.* how God had extended his Favour to divers of them, in recovering them from their Pollutions, and washing them with the Blood of *Jesus Christ*, and the Power of the Holy Ghost, by calling them to the Christian Religion; and hereby teaches them that they were indispensably engaged to avoid all Uncleaness, and that this Sin is incompetent with a Profession of Christianity.

But then forasmuch as some might be apt to object, That the Use of those things which are necessary for the Body is allow'd us; for Instance, that there is no Sin in eating whatsoever sort of Meat; and that the Case is the same as to Uncleaness. To this *St. Paul* makes two Replies.

1. He says, *ver. 12.* Though a thing be permitted, there is no need that it should be always put in practice. *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any thing.* Which Words import not, that all things are allowed without distinction; but that it is not always requisite to do what is allowed; and that Men ought not to abuse that Liberty, which is granted them of using indifferent things; lest so they be enslaved to these things, this being directly contrary to Piety. This is the Case of the Sensualists and

Licentious, who make themselves Slaves to the Flesh, and have their *Belly for their God*, as St. Paul speaks, *Phil. 3. 19.* The Apostle adds, *ver. 13.* *Meats are for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats, but God shall destroy both it and them.* And these Words explain the foregoing, and teach us that when St. Paul had said, *All things are lawful for me*, he did not mean this in general of every thing, but only of all Meats. And this he said, because those that would entice Christians to Impurity, made it their Business to persuade them, that the Use of all sorts of Meats, not excluding such as had been sacrificed to Idols, was permitted them. Wherefore he tells them the Use of Meats was permitted and necessary, that God had created them for the Sustenance of Man, and that Man was of such a Constitution, as to have constant need of them for his Support. Whereby the Apostle intimates that no Meat is by nature polluted and unlawful, and that it is allowed to use any sort of it; only with this Reserve, to which himself here directs, that we do it with Discretion, and so as that it may never become an Occasion of our either sinning against our selves, or scandalizing our Neighbour. But withal he at the same time adds, that *God will one day destroy both the Meats and the Belly*, as much as to say, The Use of these things shall be abolished at the Resurrection; and hereby gives us to understand, that the Use of Meats relating only to this animal and corporal Life, and being therefore to continue only for a time, it is highly unbecoming Christians, who profess to have more elevated Affections, and to aspire after a Spiritual, Heavenly, and Immortal Life, to set their Minds upon what is pleasing to the Flesh.

This is what St. Paul discourses of Meats; and it is his first Answer to those who pretend an Allowance

lowance of all things relating to the Body. But he proceeds farther, and gives quite a different account of Uncleanness, from what he does of Meats. *The Body, says he, is not for Fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the Body.* The Import of which Words is, that the Body was not given us to be employ'd to any infamous purpose, and that Christians are by no means to take the same Liberty here, that they may in Meats. St. Paul could not more clearly instruct us, that the Case is not the same with Uncleanness, and with the Use of Meats, and that it ought not to be ranked amongst things Indifferent and purely Natural, or perhaps necessary, as Eating and Drinking are. *The Body is made for Meats, but it is not made for Uncleanness;* on the contrary, it is made for the Lord, and is to be employ'd only to holy Purposes, and which are according to the Will of God. He adds, *And the Lord is for the Body; and God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own Power;* that is to say, Our Bodies belong to God as well as our Souls; he has consecrated them to himself by the Redemption wrought for them; and he will raise them up at the last Day, to the end he may be glorify'd both in our Bodies and in our Souls. This Right then which the Lord has over us, and particularly over our Bodies, and the Glory whereto he has ordained us, lay an indissoluble Obligation upon us, to keep our Bodies undefiled, shunning all sort of Pollution, whereby to prepare them for a happy Resurrection, and an Admission into the Kingdom of Heaven.

However, lest any should pretend that Uncleanness is no hindrance but that our Bodies may still belong to the Lord, and may be raised in his due time, and enter into his Glory; the Apostle shews the Impossibility of this, and that the Sin

of Uncleanness deprives Men of Communion with *Jesus Christ*, ver. 15. *Know ye not that your Bodies are the Members of Jesus Christ?* He supposes our whole selves to belong to Christ, and more particularly that our Bodies are to be employ'd in his Service, and the promoting our own Happiness; as all Christians are bound to confess. And the Thought hereof ought to breed in every one of us a Detestation of Uncleanness. The next Words are, *Shall I then take away the Members of Christ, and make them the Members of an Harlot?* And these Words imply two things. First, That it is a most unworthy Act to take away a Member of Christ; it is to offer him the utmost Affront; it is to force from him what is truly his own, and what he has purchased with no less a Price than his own Blood. And this Affront is so much the more outrageous, in that the Offender thus quits his Blessed Redeemer, to join himself to an infamous Person. The very Thought of such an Exchange is enough to strike a Man with Horror; and this St. Paul testifies in the following Words, *God forbid!* This is the most deplorable state a Man can bring himself into, inasmuch as whosoever is not a Member of *Jesus Christ*, must unavoidably perish. In the second place St. Paul notes that this is the certain Effect of Uncleanness, that this is a Sin which breaks off Communion with Christ, and renders such as are guilty of it the Members of an Harlot. And this Doctrine he confirms in the Verse next following.

What, know ye not, that he which is joined to an Harlot, is one Body with her? For it is written, they two shall be one Flesh. Here the Apostle refers to what God had said upon the Creation of the Man and the Woman; he saith, *They two shall be one Flesh.* These Words properly relate to Marriage; nevertheless St. Paul applies them

to Uncleanneſs, inasmuch as though the Union of Unclean Persons is Unlawful, and God has nowhere intimated the least Approbation of it, it is however in reality such an Union as of two makes one Flesh. And by Consequence whosoever falls into this Sin, becomes one Body with, and a Member of, a Harlot. Which is exceedingly unworthy of a Christian, and inconsistent with our Union to our Blessed Lord. As *St. Paul* maintains, by what he subjoins in the next Verse. *Ver. 17. But he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit with him.* The Meaning of which Assertion is, That those who are joined to Christ by a true Faith, are animated by his Spirit, have the same Will, the same Purposes, the same Designs with him, and so are utterly estranged from all Thoughts of forsaking him to follow the Desires of the Flesh, and to join themselves to dissolute and unclean Persons.

To this purpose he proceeds, *ver. 18. Flee Fornication. Every Sin that a Man doth is without the Body; but he that committeth Fornication sinneth against his own Body.* Whereby *St. Paul* does not intend only, that Unclean Persons hurt their own Bodies, and bring divers Mischiefs upon themselves; for there are several other Sins which hurt the Body likewise; but he doubtless says it for these two Reasons. *First*, because this Sin is directly opposite to our Union with Christ, seeing it cannot be committed without making us one Body with the Harlot. The Body ceases thenceforwards to be a Member of *Jesus Christ*, as the Apostle has already taught, and by Consequence they that indulge themselves in this Sin, are great Enemies to themselves, and sin against their own Body. *Secondly*, *St. Paul* says this because Uncleanneſs being of a shameful and infamous nature, it pollutes and dishonours our Bodies, and our Persons,

fons, beyond other Sins. Which Observation of the Apostle is explained by what he affirms of the Heathens, *Rom. i. 24.* that *being given up to Uncleanness, they dishonoured their own Bodies between themselves.*

St. Paul urges another Consideration, *ver. 19.* *What, know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?* And this is a very powerful Consideration for dissuading from Uncleanness, being taken from the Glory whereto God has raised us even in regard to our Bodies. They are the Temples of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit dwells in us, and pours forth his Benefits upon us, sanctifies us, and consecrates us to the Service of God. Wherefore our Bodies partaking of this Honour, we are bound to preserve them in Purity, and to employ them to holy Purposes. For if the Places dedicated to the Worship of God, may not be profaned by any Pollution, but must be kept pure and undefiled, how great ought the Holiness of our Bodies to be, seeing God has condescended to make them the Temples of his Holy Spirit? This Reflexion of St. Paul lets us see plainly, that whenever any give themselves over to Uncleanness, they cease to be the Temples of the Holy Spirit, just as the Apostle had said before, that they cease to be the Members of *Jesus Christ*. Which shews this Sin to be the Occasion that the Holy Spirit of God withdraws from the Heart of such as are guilty of it, because this Spirit cannot dwell with Pollution.

Finally, St. Paul concludes his Discourse concerning the Sin I am treating of, with this Advice, *ver. 19, 20.* *Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a Price: therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are Gods.* Which the Apostle might speak with the greater Earnestness, to con-

convince us that it is in no wise permitted us to order our selves according to our own Desires, and to follow the Motions and Inclinations of the Flesh ; but that we are to pay an absolute Submission to the Will of him whose we are. As we are Christians, whom our Lord has purchased with his own most precious Blood, he has an absolute Dominion over us ; our Bodies, our Souls, our whole selves are entirely his, and may not be put to any other Use than what is agreeable to his most holy Will.

I cannot forbear repeating it, that this Chapter calls for an especial Attention ; and that St. *Paul* does not only exhort the *Corinthians* to fly Uncleaness, but proves by several Arguments, how unbecoming Christians this Sin is ; he proposes his Reasons with great Earnestness and Vehemence ; he insists upon it ; and makes use of the most powerful Dissuasives from it. And after all this can it possibly be made a Question, Whether Uncleaness be sinful, and absolutely forbidden ?

I know not how what I have said can possibly be answered, nor to what Evasions our Libertines can have recourse, for eluding the force of these Passages. It may perhaps be pretended that St. *Paul* does not condemn simple Fornication, but only the utmost Excess of Impurity, or that Crime which is committed with profligate and prostitute Persons. Nor do I deny but he might have that Crime in his view, in this Chapter ; yet whosoever shall seriously attend to all that has been said, and shall weigh all the Reasons and the Proofs that have been alledged, will easily observe that this is not all the Apostle condemns, and that the Arguments he produces are levelled against all manner of Uncleaness. However to set this matter in its due Light, and to stop the Mouths of such as would
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try to elude the Proofs brought from this Chapter, I proceed to make it indisputably evident, That all ſort of Uncleanneſs, that ſimple Fornication, in a word, that all that is without Marriage is forbidden to Chriſtians.

To prove this we need only paſs on to the Seventh Chapter of this ſame Epiſtle. St. Paul having ſpoken of Impurity in the preceding Chapter, examines in this into certain Questions relating to Marriage. Whence I might offer divers Conſiderations; but I ſhall content my ſelf to touch only the Chief of them. Now what we read here is ſo clear and expreſs, that nothing can be imagined plainer or more deciſive. In the beginning of the Chapter St. Paul deſigning to answer thoſe Questions about Marriage and Celibacy, of which the Church of *Corinth* had deſired his Reſolution, tells them *it is good for a Man not to touch a Woman*, hereby recommending the ſtate of Celibacy as preferable to that of Matrimony. He deſcribes the ſtate of Celibacy in theſe Words, *Not to touch a Woman*, which is a plain Proof that all who are Unmarried are to live in perfect Continence, and abſtain from all impure Converſation, of whatſoever nature. And to the ſame purpoſe, ver. 34. he declares the ſtate of an unmarried Woman to be this, that ſhe *careth for the things of the Lord, that ſhe may be holy both in Body and in Spirit*.

Again the Apoſtle ſays, ver. 2. *Nevertheless becauſe of, or to avoid, Fornication, let every Man have his own Wife, and let every Woman have her own Huſband*. It is as clear as the Day that St. Paul calls all that is committed out of Marriage, after whatever manner, by the Name of Fornication. Nor could he have more expreſſly ſignify'd what he means by Fornication, and how far the Importance of this Word is to be extended. *To avoid For-*

Fornication, let every one have his own Wife, &c. This shews clearly both the Sin spoken of, and the Obligation Christians are under to avoid it; that the Apostle imposes upon unmarried Persons of either Sex a Necessity of living in Chastity; and that out of Marriage all is sinful.

St. Paul after this having mentioned the Duties of Married Persons, returns ver. 8, 9. to speak again of the Unmarried, *I say therefore to the Unmarried and Widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain themselves, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn.* Which Words need no Comment upon them. Either they have no Sense at all, or they signify a Necessity of living in an exact and perfect Continence, or else of Marrying; and that there is no Medium between these two Estates. If Uncleanness were not a Sin, in a Word, if any thing had been permitted besides Marriage, the Apostle could not have spoken in this manner, without laying a Snare for People's Consciences; neither would he have said that Marriage was the only means of avoiding Uncleanness, the only Remedy against Incontinence. Hence therefore I conclude, that St. Paul condemns not only the last Excesses of Uncleanness, and that unbounded Liberty some may take this way, but even simple Fornication; and this so plainly, that I persuade my self none can have any Scruple remaining concerning it. Let us pass to St. Paul's other Epistles.

Gal. 5. 19. The Apostle undertaking to explain what it is to live after the Flesh, says, *The Works of the Flesh are manifest, or easy to be known.* Then he proceeds to enumerate the principal Sins of the Flesh, and names first *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness.* He names these Sins before others, as being most manifest, and most easily discernible. And he does not name Adultery alone,

alone, but joins with it Fornication, together with Uncleanness and Lasciviousness, which comprehends all the Species of Impurity. He joins with this Sin, *Witchcraft, Murder, and other Crimes.* And he expressly protests, that *they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* By which Passage it appears, that if there be any one Sin that excludes from Heaven, Impurity does it.

The same Apostle treating of the Duties of the Christian Life, in the fourth and fifth Chapters of the Epistle to the *Epheſians*, insists chiefly upon the Renunciation of Uncleanness. He professes that Christians may not live as the Pagans did, who were overwhelmed with thick Darkness, and so fell into terrible Exorbitances. And to set forth their excessive Corruption, in its due Colours, he offers at no other Proof but the Impurity of their Lives. *The Gentiles, says he, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto Lasciviousness, to commit all Uncleanness with greediness.* He exhorts the Christians to be by no means like them; and recommends Chastity to them, not only in their Actions, but in their Discourse; *Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouth.*

In the fifth Chapter he continues his Exhortation to a holy Life; and generally what he presses is with relation to Impurity. Ver. 3. 4. *But Fornication, and all Uncleanness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh Saints. Neither Filthiness, nor foolish Talking, which are not convenient.* And to add the more weight to this his Exhortation, he subjoins ver. 5. *For this ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Person, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God.* And not content with having denounced this so dreadful a Punishment to the Impure, and lest any should not be duly sensible of the great Evil of the Sin to which he threatens it, he repeats his Denunciation in these

these Words; *Let no Man deceive you with vain Words; for because of these things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience.* And again he cautions and presses them carefully to avoid this Sin, and all such Persons as would invite them to it. *Ver. 7. Be not ye therefore Partakers with them;* and again, *ver. 11. 12. Have no Fellowship with the unfruitful Works of Darkness, but rather reprove them;* for it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. The Tendency and Design of which whole Discourse is to inspire the Christians with an Abhorrence of Impurity.

It is observable likewise that he pursues the same Design, in the third Chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians. According to his usual Method, he begins his Exhortation with a particular respect to Chastity, *ver. 5. Mortify therefore your Members which are upon the Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affections, evil Concupiscence.* And his manner of speaking concerning Impurity is very remarkable. He distinguishes this Sin from others, and makes it an Article by it self; he insists upon it more largely than upon the rest; he enforces his Exhortation with both Menaces and Motives, *ver. 6, 7.* After which resuming his Discourse, he treats of other Sins; but then he but lightly touches upon them in a word or two. *Ver. 8. Put off all these, Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blasphemy, &c.* Which is a farther Confirmation, that of all sorts of Sins, there is none the Apostle seems more avowedly to condemn than that of Uncleanneſs.

In the fourth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, see how he begins his Recommendation of Holiness. *Ver. 2, 3, 4, 5. Ye know what Commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus For this is the Will of God, even your Sanctification, that ye should abstain from Fornication; that every one of you should*

should know how to possess his Vessel (that is, his Body) in Sanctification and Honour ; not in the Lust of Concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God. Upon which Words divers Reflexions naturally arise. For instance, St. Paul says, the Will of God, and one of the principal Commands of Jesus Christ, is, That we live chastly : Hereby testifying that without Chastity, there is no Holiness or Obedience to the Divine Will ; and consequently no Hope of Salvation. He says that it is the Will of God that we abstain from Uncleanness, that is, that we perfectly renounce it, and in no wise suffer our selves to be betray'd into it. And again he more fully explains himself, by declaring that every one of us ought to possess, or preserve his Body in Holiness and Purity ; as if he should have said, That all sorts of Persons without exception ought to be very watchful over their own Bodies to preserve them from all manner of Pollution, and to live in Continence and Chastity. And he proves all Christians to be under this Obligation, by declaring it unlawful for them to follow the inordinate Desires of the Flesh, as the Gentiles do who know not God.

Nor may we omit what is affirmed in the thirteenth Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, ver. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled ; but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.* We need only read these Words to convince us, that Marriage is a Holy and Honourable State, provided that we live chastly in it ; but withal that God will punish all unclean Persons ; as well those that violate the Sanctity of Marriage by Adultery, as those who live incontinently out of Marriage. The Opposition *St. Paul* makes between Adultery and Fornication on the one hand, and Marriage on the other, shews plainly that except in the Case of chaste and pure Marriage, all

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is faulty ; and as Marriage is an honourable State, so Uncleanness is just matter of Reproach and Infamy. The Apostle would not have put Fornication in the same Class with Adultery, if it were of an indifferent nature ; nor would have threaten'd those that fall into it with the Judgment of God, as he does the Adulterers.

I might have cited a great number of Texts out of the New Testament, and by enquiring into the other Epistles, particularly the second Epistle of St. Peter, Chap. 2. and the Epistle of St. Jude, might have shewn that Impurity was the principal Character, which the Apostles gave to the false Christians, and false Teachers of those Times. But I will not enlarge upon this Subject. What I have said is enough to let every one see who does not wilfully shut his Eyes, that Uncleanness is condemn'd through the whole New Testament ; and more particularly that Fornication is a Sin. This Nature teaches, and the Old Law confirms ; but the Gospel gives such abundant Evidence to the Truth of it, that there is no being certain of any thing in Religion, if not of this.

CHAP. VI.

Of Adultery.

AFTER what has been discoursed of Uncleanness and Fornication, there will be no need of treating at large of Adultery. The Considerations which have been offered against Uncleanness in general, are yet of greater Force when apply'd to this Vice. But however there are other

particular Reasons besides these, which plainly discover the Enormity of it.

I. A very little Attention will suffice to inform us, that it violates the most sacred Laws, and in particular those of Marriage, which are so serviceable, and so necessary to the Good of Mankind. These Laws of Marriage have in all Ages been looked upon as inviolable, and are especially to be so esteemed by all who are instructed in the Doctrines of Religion, and are satisfy'd that God is the Author of Marriage. It was God who in the Beginning created one Man and one Woman, and said, *They two should be one Flesh*. Here is the first Institution of Marriage; and our Blessed Lord cites it in his Gospel, *St. Matth. 19. 4.* to prove the Unlawfulness of those Divorces, which had obtained among the *Jews*. Whence it is easy to judge what Opinion each one ought to have of Adultery. For upon Supposition that Divorcing is contrary to the Law of Marriage, Adultery is yet more opposite to it. If our Lord Christ says, that those who put away their Wives without any just Cause, to marry others, or that marry them who have in this manner been put away, are guilty of Sin; What must be said of those who being under the Bonds of Marriage, yet abandon themselves to Uncleanness? Those Engagements which are inviolable even from the nature of Marriage, become much more so amongst Christians, by the Faith mutually given at the Entrance upon this State, and the solemn Promises then made, in the Presence of God, and by all that is most sacred. So that the Violaters of these Engagements and Promises, in breaking their Conjugal Faith, are justly chargeable with the utmost Perfidiousness, and undoubted Perjury.

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What I here say relates equally to all whether Men or Women. Nor shall I stand to enquire in this place, whether the Crime is greater, on the Husband's side, or on the Wife's. In some respects the Fault of the Woman is the worse, and in others that of the Husband exceeds it. But be this as it will, it is certain that in regard to the Divine Institution, and the Nature, and End of Marriage, and to Right Reason, the Engagements are Equal on both sides, and both Husband and Wife are under the same Obligation of Fidelity to each other. This appears from what our Saviour discourses concerning Divorce, *St. Mar. 10. 11. Whosoever shall unjustly put away his Wife, and marry another, committeth Adultery against her.* *St. Paul* says expressly, *1 Cor. 7. 3, 4, 5. The Husband hath not power over his own Body, or is not Master of it, but the Wife; and the Wife hath not power over her own Body, but the Husband.* Whereto he also subjoins divers other Considerations †, which put it † See v. 10, beyond all Dispute or Contradiction, that the Engagements are reciprocal, and the Right equal on both sides. 11, &c. This he supposes throughout the whole Chapter, as every one must see that reads it with any manner of Attention. Besides, that I may just mention it by the bye, the Words now cited are an incontestable Argument against Polygamy; as well as those at *ver. 2. Let every Man have his own Wife, and every Woman her own Husband.* Indeed his whole Discourse restrains Marriage to Two Persons. And so the Apostle teaches it to be as little in the power of the Husband to have many Wives, as it is in the Power of the Wife to have many Husbands.

If we reflect moreover upon what has been argued, to shew the Advantage of Marriage to Society, and the Welfare of Families, we shall soon be convinced, that these Effects so highly bene-

cial to Mankind, are not to be expected any longer than its mutual Obligations are inviolably observed. Adultery destroys the Foundation of that Peace and Quiet of Families which is design'd by it, that Union and Happiness of the Married Persons, and the good Education of their Children; and instead hereof introduces Trouble, Division, Jealousy, Hatred, and other Mischiefs innumerable. We have likewise seen that Fathers are under a natural Obligation to take care of, bring up, and love their Children, and that to this purpose it is required they should know them, that they may look after them, and live with them. And this Consideration should satisfy us, that Adultery is inevitably attended with divers other Crimes, and most heinous Instances of Injustice, and that the Consequents of it are very terrible. It hinders Parents Care of their Children, and occasions their leaving them exposed to the wide World, brings strange Children into Families, and robs the right Heirs of the Portion of Goods that God and Nature had allotted them. I will not enlarge upon these Considerations, nor mention some others that might be added, for fear of being tedious, and because they so readily occur of themselves, and every one is so sensible of them, that there is none but must own Adultery to be a most heinous, notorious Crime.

II. Yet I must observe in the Second Place, that the Observations which may be made against Adultery, are so natural, and so convincing, that they have always been taken notice of. It has been acknowledged in all Ages, that this Sin is destructive of Justice, Order, and the Good of Society. And the Law whereby it stands condemned, is not such as those which are made for some one particular Country; but it is of general Obligation, and as ancient as the World it self.

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It has been consented to at all Times, and in all Places; and there have been very few Laws besides, that have obtained a like Universal Approbation. Whenever we read the Histories, and Statute-Books, the Opinions, and Customs, of the different Nations of the World, we cannot but take notice how Adultery has been constantly condemn'd. Uncleanness was too commonly practised among the Heathens; yet not so generally, but that Marriage was ever respected by them, and Adultery looked upon as an abominable Wickedness, and which they thought not undeserving to be punished with Death. This all who have been any whit conversant in History and Antiquity cannot but be sensible of.

Nor do only particular Authors give this Representation of it; as *Aristotle*, who determines that Adultery, whether it be in Man or Woman, ought to be put in the Rank of the foulest and most infamous Enormities; but we have also the Concurrence of Legislators, and of whole Countries. The Egyptians, the Lacedemonians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Goths, the ancient Germans, have forbidden Adultery under the severest Penalties, and almost all under Pain of Death. And even at this day it escapes not better amongst the Africans and Americans.

It is also to be noted, that it was not only forbidden, but the Practice of it was very rarely known amongst these People; and * *Plutarch* and other Authors give such an Account of it, as may well put us Christians to the blush. And if per-

† *Polit. l. 7.* *Plutarch* says, in his Laconick Apothegms, that Adultery was heretofore looked upon at Lacedemon, as impossible and incredible; and gives this Reason of his Assertion, That needful Ornaments, and Perfumes, Supersticity and Luxury were banished that City.

haps it be pretended that whilſt theſe Heathens reſtrained from Adultery, they did it not from any Senſe they had of its Guilt, but only for fear of the Punishment to which they ſhould thereby expoſe themſelves; and that it was thought unlawful only becauſe it had been ſo ſeverely forbidden; I do not deny this, and muſt own that Impunity is the Cauſe of its becoming ſo uſual as it is in our Days. Yet I muſt affirm that it was not barely a Fear of the Laws that made this to be reckon'd a Crime; for they who made theſe Laws, and ſettled theſe Penalties, did it not from a Senſe of Fear, but for Reaſons taken from the Nature of the Thing itſelf. Now the if Pagans had this Notion of Adultery, much more ought Chriſtians to have it in Detestation. And we may aſſure ourſelves, theſe Idolatrous Nations will one day riſe up in Judgment againſt thoſe, who living in the Church of Chriſt, give themſelves up to this horrible Wickedneſs, and will not be withheld from it by the Light of the Goſpel, and the Dread of Eternal Vengeance.

III. And now to come to the Holy Scriptures, and to begin with the Times preceding the Moſaick Law; it is plain, Adultery was then accounted amongſt the Blackeſt of Crimes. *Job* ſays, Chap. 31. 11. *It is an heinous Crime, yea it is an Iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges.* And *Joſeph* before the Days of *Job*, teſtifies what an Abhorrence he had of it, by the Answer he gave to *Poriphar's* Wife, when ſhe would have enticed him to it. Gen. 39. 9. *How can I do this great Wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* And if we look ſtill backwarder, we ſhall find in the twelfth and twentieth Chapters of *Genesis*, how *Pharaoh* King of Egypt, and *Abimelech* King of Gerar, having taken *Sarah* to themſelves, and intending to marry her, not knowing that ſhe was already Wife to *Abraham*, both

both returned her to him immediately, when once they understood her Relation to him ; taxing him withal, for not having let them know it sooner, *Why didst thou not tell us she was thy Wife, and hast brought upon us and upon our People a great Sin ?* The like Account is also to be met with in the twenty sixth Chapter of *Genesis*. And it is an ancient Tradition of the *Jews*, That amongst the Laws delivered by God to *Noah* after the Flood, and in him to all Mankind, one was against the Abuse of Marriage by this grievous Sin.

If we pass on to the Law of *Moses*, this will afford us divers Observations very pertinent to the Matter in hand.

1. God expressly forbids Adultery in the Decalogue. In this Law which contains the most inviolable Rules of Justice, and which the Almighty published on Mount *Sinai*, with Thunder and Lightenings, one Commandment is, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*. And this Crime is put in the Divine Law in the same rank with Idolatry, Murder, and Theft.

2. Amongst the Laws which God afterwards delivered by *Moses* for the Explication of the Decalogue, there are several relating to Marriage and Adultery, which were particularly design'd to prevent the Commission of this Sin.

3. God who is a just Judge, and assigns to each Sin a Penalty proportion'd to the Heinousness of its Guilt, has decreed Adulterers, whether Men or Women, to be put to death. *Levit. 20. 10. and Deut. 22. 22. The Adulterer and the Adulteress shall be put to death.*

4. But this is not all. For seeing this Sin may be committed secretly, God thought fit to order a Method for the Discovery of it ; so that a Woman suspected could not escape Death, if really guilty ; I mean the Waters of *† Jealousy*. If the *† Numb. Man 5. 11, &c.*

Man had entertain'd a Suspicion of his Wife, he was to bring her to the Priest, before whom she was to stand with her Head uncovered, and with the Offering of Memorial in her Hand, and to drink of the bitter Water, which he was to give her to that end; saying to her at the same time, *If no Man hath lien with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside by Uncleanness to another instead of thy Husband, be thou free from this bitter Water that causeth the Curse; but if thou art guilty,* (then he caused an Oath to be administred to the Woman, full of Imprecations against her self) *the Lord make thee a Curse and an Oath among thy People, when the Lord doth make thy Thigh to rot, and thy Belly to swell.* Whereto she was to answer, *Amen, Amen.* There were Ceremonies to be observed in her taking these Waters; and the Effect they produc'd, if the Woman was faulty, was, that she would immediately swell and die.

Another Law shewing the Heinousness of Adultery, and how inviolable and sacred the Rights of Marriage are, as likewise in what Purity all ought to live even before they enter upon that State, is that which orders such as should fall into Uncleanness, after they are once espoused, to be treated as Adulteresses. *Deut. 22, 23, 24;* That they with the Partners in their Sin should be punished with Death, and the People should stone them.

It would be too tedious an Undertaking, to recite here all the Laws, the Threatnings, the Reprehensions, and the Examples to this purpose that are to be met with in the Old Testament. I shall only take notice, that Adultery is one of those Sins the Prophets so severely reprove the Jews for. They commonly join it with Idolatry, and say their City *Jerusalem* and their People should be destroy'd because of the Adulteries that were committed in the midst of them. In the Censures which

which *Jeremiah* passed upon the *Jews*, he insisted upon their Idolatries, their Perjuries, their Murders, and particularly their Adulteries, as a Proof of their abominable Hypocrisy, and a Presage of their Destruction. *Jer. 7. 9. Will ye steal, murder, and commit Adultery, and swear falsely? &c.* And in the twenty ninth Chapter of the same Prophet, he foretels both King and People should be carried Captives to *Babylon*, *Because they had committed Villany in Israel, and had committed Adultery with their Neighbours Wives*, ver. 23. The like Reproofs and Menaces are also to be met with in the fifth Chapter of this Prophet *Jeremiah*, and in the rest of the Prophets.

IV. As to the New Testament, I shall not give a particular Account of what Passages are to be found there concerning Adultery, because I have already mention'd most of them in the Chapter immediately foregoing. We see this Sin condemned most expressly and by Name, *St. Mar. vii. 21. I Cor. vi. 10. Gal. v. 19.* and above all *Heb. xiii. 4. God shall judge the Whoremongers and Adulterers.* *St. Paul's* manner of Speech concerning the Laws and Rights of Marriage in the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, Ch. vii. is likewise very full to our purpose.

And hereto also agrees the Notion which the Ancient Primitive Christians had of Adultery. By whom this Sin was looked upon as of a most provoking nature; and they therefore proceeded with the utmost Severity against such as were found guilty of it. It was one of those three egregious Crimes, against which the Ecclesiastical Discipline was exercised in its utmost Rigour; the other two being Idolatry and Murder. Whence Offenders in this kind were used to be kept under Excommunication for many Years together; and there was a Time, when they were not to be restor'd

stor'd to the Peace of the Church, till at the Point of Death. St. Cyprian testifies † that there were some Churches where Absolution was never granted them. And though perhaps this might be an over-rigorous Course with them, nevertheless we see by it, what a mighty Abhorrence the first Christians had of Adultery. And accordingly the Practice of it was very rarely to be heard of amongst them. They could then boldly plead for themselves against their Pagan Adversaries, * That they committed neither Murder nor Adultery, and indeed had not known there were any such Crimes committed in the World, had they not observed how customary they were amongst these same Pagans. And even the better and juster sort of the Pagans themselves, could not but own the Purity of the Christians both Religion and Manners, and bear testimony to them, That they engaged themselves by a solemn Oath, neither to be guilty of Adultery, nor any other Crime. As is plainly to be seen in that noted Letter ‡ which the younger Pliny wrote to the Emperor Trajan.

However after some time the Case began to alter. The Dread of this Crime abated; the Discipline relaxed; and those Abominations which the Gospel had given a great check to, not only gained at length an Admittance, but became frequent amongst its Professors; and is still unhappily too prevalent with them, to the great Dishonour of our most holy Religion.

Wherefore having thus seen what the Gospel of our Lord, what Moses's Law, what Nature, and

† Ep. ad Anton. Et quidem apud Antecessores nostros quidam de Episcopis istinc in Provinciâ nostrâ, dandam Pacem Mœchis non putaverunt, & in totum Poenitentiae locum contra Adulterium clausurunt.

* Mu. Fel. O. Hov.

‡ Plin. l. 10. Ep. 97.

what the very Heathens have taught concerning Adultery, I ask what Sentiment we ought all to have of this Sin and those that commit it? And whether a Man must not have renounced all Religion and even Natural Justice, before he can deliver himself up to a Crime so infamous as this?

Thus I have shewn that Uncleanness is a Sin, whether it proceed to the grosser Act of Adultery, or terminate only in Fornication. I shall not in this place insist upon those other Crimes into which Uncleanness is apt to draw Persons, such as Incest, and those terrible Enormities which Modesty forbids to name; and which Almighty God has formerly thought fit to punish with Fire from Heaven. These are such monstrous Impieties, as one can hardly tell how to mention. And all the Reflection I shall make upon them, is that of St. Paul upon a like Occasion, *Rom. i.* which yet ought to strike all those with a Fit of Trembling, who suffer themselves to be enslaved to the infamous Lusts of Impurity; namely, that when People are possessed with these Passions, there is nothing so foul as they will not be ready to venture upon; they lose all Sense of Shame, and involve themselves in all manner of Licentiousness. God in his just Judgment gives up all such as thus forsake Him, to the Desires of their own Hearts, till they arrive at the most intolerable Abominations. And their Sensuality is too apt to entice them to such Enormities as Human Nature recoils at, and seems scarce capable of yielding to. Of which yet we have too plain Examples in the *Sodomites* and the ancient *Canaanites*. And we have all therefore very good reason, seriously and with a hearty Concern for our own Welfare, to consider these Examples and those dreadful Excesses, whereinto Sensuality casts People headlong, when once they

they give themselves up to it. And this Consideration ought to have a powerful Influence upon us, to keep us within the Bounds of our Duty, and to engage us to be continually upon our Guard against all Uncleanness, as a most dangerous Lust, and most earnestly to be avoided.

CHAP. VII.

Of the other Species of Uncleanness.

A Dultery and Fornication are not all the Sins into which People are betray'd by Uncleanness; but there are other Species of it besides these two. There are a great Number of Persons, who are no way chargeable with these gross Sins, whose horrid Guilt I have been hitherto relating, who yet cannot clear themselves from the Charge of being Sensual, Impure, and Slaves to the inordinate Motions of the Flesh. And forasmuch as the greater Part of these are not apprehensive of the dangerous Condition they are in; nay, oftentimes on the contrary, take themselves to be innocent, or at least not to have incurred any considerable Guilt, it is but fit they should be disabused, and made more sensible how the Case is with them. This therefore is what I am next to apply my self to; and I beseech all that shall read what I here offer to their Consideration, seriously to attend to it, and impartially to examine and try themselves by it.

I say then, there are other Species of Impurity besides those hitherto treated of. And these may properly be reduced to three Heads, impure Actions, impure Words, and impure Thoughts.

I. There

I. There are many Actions contrary to Modesty and Chastity; some whereof by the Violence of the Passion, and the full Consent of the Will, or by reason of the Malignity and Infamy of the Action, almost equal the Crime to which they tend. For some unchast Persons are hurried on by their Lust, to try in every thing to gratify their brutal Passion, as far as they can contrive to do it without committing the Fact. But here I must be very wary, and leave to my Readers the Trouble of considering with themselves what I may not say, and applying to all the Actions of Impurity, what I may but just touch upon very briefly, and only in general Terms. Amongst these Actions contrary to Purity are to be reckoned all those Deeds, and whatsoever Instances of Behaviour, that are uncivil and too free; such as immodest Touches, and lascivious Gestures. Hitherto also is to be reduced Indecency and Immodesty of Apparel, as well as too familiar Converse betwixt those of different Sexes. Under each of which Articles there are divers Particulars to be treated of, but that I shall have a more proper Occasion of doing it, when they shall hereafter fall in our way.

Now forasmuch as I cannot well repeat all those Actions which are hurtful to Purity, and yet my Readers may be doubtful of some of them, and may question whether this or that be unlawful, I shall lay down this one general Rule in this place, whereby these Doubts may be easily resolved. Let natural Chastity and Modesty be first consulted; because provided a Habit of Wickedness has not quite extinguish'd in us the Sense of Modesty which is natural to us as Men, we shall readily discern, whether an Action be unchast, or no. Next this Principle is to be attended to; That a Christian is bound to shun whatever sensualizes the Soul,

Soul, whatever tends only to satisfy the Passions, and whatever is wont to excite them either in our selves or others. And again, Enquiry should be made what is necessary, or at least is expressly allow'd. I say then, that whensoever we are ashamed of what we do, and dare not venture upon it in the sight of others; when it is only the Effect of a disorderly Passion, and aims only at indulging Sensuality, and kindling impure Desires either in our own or others Hearts; and when moreover it is neither necessary nor expressly allow'd; we should be sure to abstain from it.

If this Rule be thought not to be clear enough, and each one has yet his Scruples remaining, and cannot well satisfy himself, whether an Action be contrary to Purity, or be not; behold another Direction which leaves no Difficulty remaining. In all doubtful Cases, and when the Conscience is yet unsatisfy'd, the safer side is constantly to be chosen, which is not to yield to our Passion. There is never any Danger in taking this Course, though there be a great deal on the other hand, or rather though it be always sinful to do † what one doubts of, and cannot satisfy himself whether it be permitted, or whether it be forbidden.

Moreover it is easy to discern that impure Actions are forbidden for two Reasons. *First, Be-*

† This must be understood of things perfectly in our own Power, and where no Command of our Superiours intervenes. For where Authority has commanded our Obedience, this Command must over-rule our Doubts. As the Judicious Bishop Sanderson has clearly shewn, in his fourth Sermon ad Clerum, Sect. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. And the present Lord Archbishop of York, in the second Part of his Discourse of Conscience. And Dr. Calamy, Of a Scrupulous Conscience, p. 35, &c. Nor indeed will it hold in all Cases, not over-ruled by any Command of Authority. As is solidly argued in the foresaid second Part of the Discourse of Conscience, p. 16, &c.

cause they are a likely Means of carrying Men on to the grosser Crime. People don't ordinarily arrive at the Height of Wickedness all at once, but by certain Steps and Degrees. They begin with what they think lawful; they accustom themselves to violate the Rules of Chastity in such Instances as they persuade themselves can have no great hurt in them. But then from these lesser Offences, they proceed to others, whose Wickedness they cannot but be sensible of; and so at length they fall into the more horrid Crime. But in the second place, though we should never come thus far, and our unchast Actions should never push us on to the utmost Licentiousness, they however defile the Soul; they increase the Inclination to Uncleaness, and withdraw from God. As a very little Observation will inform those who allow themselves in these sort of Liberties.

To impure Actions may be subjoin'd such Looks as are contrary to Chastity, inasmuch as a Man may be guilty also of Sin in this respect, whether in beholding such Objects, or in reading such Books, as may be apt to beget unlawful Desires. It is an undoubted Truth, that impure Passions are chiefly raised and enflamed by the Sight, and that it is impossible to continue chaste, without a diligent Care to govern the Eyes, and to turn them away from whatsoever might seduce the Heart. Let but any one enquire into the Objects and Writings I am speaking of, and the Impressions they are apt to make upon the Mind, and this will presently convince him of the Evil and Danger of suffering his Eyes to dwell upon them. These Objects pollute the Imagination, filling it with lustful Thoughts; and it is only through the Temptation of Sensuality, that any can fix their Eyes upon them, or take any manner of Pleasure in them. The Holy Scriptures sufficiently caution
against

against these undue Liberties. It was by the Sight that *David* was enticed to commit Iniquity. And *Job* who lived at a time when Moral Chastity was less known than it has been since, had yet learned that the principal Duty of Chastity was to regulate the Sight; as he declares, *Chap. xxxi. 1. I made a Covenant with mine Eyes; why should I then look upon a Maid?* And no Christian can deny the Necessity of this Duty, after what our Blessed Lord has said, *St. Matth. v. 28. Whosoever looketh upon a Woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart.* Agreeably hereto the Character also *St. Peter* gives of those carnal Christians, against whom he wrote, was that *they had Eyes full of Idolatry, 2 St. Peter ii. 14.* The Sum is, That it is an infallible Sign of an unchast Person, to delight in fixing the Sight upon such Objects as promote Impurity. As I shall have occasion to observe again in the Sequel of this Discourse; and especially with regard to lascivious Books.

This likewise I must add, That if it be sinful to behold tempting Objects, it must be no less so to present such Objects to others. Upon which account those are highly to blame, who cloath not themselves with Shamefastness and Sobriety, and do not cover themselves as Christian Modesty requires. They hereby become an Occasion of the Fall and Offence of others, and expose themselves to that dreadful Vengeance, which our Saviour *Christ* pronounces against those *by whom the Offence cometh.* For the same Reason unchast Pictures, obscene and lascivious Draughts and Representations, are to be utterly banished from among Christians, as just matter of Infamy and Danger. Which shews to what a dismal Ebb Christianity is now come; of which there needs no clearer Evidence than the Dissoluteness in Habits and Pictures that is so commonly to be observed. The Pagans had

had impure Paintings and Representations ; and it was an Effect of their Depravation, and an unhappy Fruit of their Religion, whose Worship, and whose Gods in a sort authoriz'd and encourag'd it. And this was one Cause why the Primitive Christians had such an Aversion to all Painting and Sculpture, which yet are inoffensive Arts, provided they be not abused to bad purposes. The Dread they had of Idolatry inspired them with this Opinion ; and they were much confirmed in it, by the Immodesty and Lasciviousness of several Pictures and Statues they had met with amongst the Heathens. Like to which none were ever seen in Christians Houses, during the first Ages of the Church ; howsoever it is a sad Truth, that they are now grown so common, and the Abuse in this respect so shameful, that a great part of the Professors of our most holy Religion scarce seem to differ from those Idolaters.

II. The Second Species of Impurity is that of Words. And with what a degree of Guilt these are chargeable, may easily be known, if we but a little reflect upon the Cause from whence they proceed, and the Effect they produce.

As to the former of these, our Blessed Saviour has taught us, that *out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh*, St. Matth. xii. 34. Which though spoken in general Terms is fitly applicable to immodest Words ; which cannot come from other than an impure Heart, and a Person almost entirely void of Shame. As it is Impurity to Think and Do things contrary to Chastity, so it is no less to Speak them. Inordinate Thoughts and Actions without doubt are criminal, though a Man may contain his Thoughts within his own Breast, may conceal his Actions, and may be very reserved in his Discourse ; but if he come to that pass, as to give a free vent to his Thoughts, and

to hold immodest Discourse, and talk lewdly and dissolutely, this shews him to have a very corrupt Heart, and betrays a Stock of Impudence as well as of Impurity.

On the other side, impure and lascivious Discourse is apt to produce most mischievous Effects, both in the Speaker and the Hearers, and is a great Temptation to the fouler Crime. The Liberty of Speech too many allow themselves, and the Custom they indulge themselves in, of saying, and hearkening to what is contrary to Purity and Chastity, is very destructive of Modesty and Virtue. There is no passing those Limits which Modesty and Decency prescribe, but Persons quickly grow to be no longer upon the Reserve, and take daily more and more Liberty, and the Abhorrence they had of Uncleanness wears off, their Vice becomes familiar to them, and they accustom themselves to look upon it, without any Veil or Covering.

Unclean Discourse is so evidently destructive of Virtue and Natural Modesty, that the very Heathens could say, A Virtuous Man ought never to speak what is uneasy to chaste and modest Ears; that an Obscene Word is contrary to Virtue, and disreputable to the Speaker; and that Dissolute Discourse is to be abhor'd, as well as the Actions themselves *. But Christians have more express Rules and Precepts for their Direction herein.

† Eph. 4.
29.

|| Eph. 5.
3, 4.

† Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouth, but that which is good to the use of Edifying, that it may minister Grace unto the Hearers. || But Fornication, and all Uncleanness, let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh Saints; neither Filthiness, nor foolish Talking, nor Jesting, which are not convenient, or becoming your Profession. See here an abso-

* Plutarch. Of Hearing the Poets.

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lute Prohibition, but withal in very general Terms, to let us know how reserved, and how circumspect Christians ought to be, that they speak nothing which does not well consist with Modesty and Decency. But especially it is to be observ'd, how the Apostle condemns, not only all gross Obscenity, and such filthy lascivious Expressions, as one of any measure of Virtue would be ashamed to utter; but in general all Discourse that borders upon Impurity, and any way implies it. He forbids even all light and vain Talk, all Buffoonery, and Scurrility, as not becoming Christians; and which suit not with the Holiness of their Profession.

So that were but People well convinced, and duly mindful of these Doctrines, this must necessarily work a Reformation in their Discourse and Conversation, and make them much more observant and cautious how they speak, that they never utter an unchast Expression, or that tends to Impurity. It would cause them to abstain from many things, which according to the Liberty that is usually taken are now looked upon as innocent. For Example; They would not then be so ready to entertain each other with wanton Songs, and soft and effeminate Airs, and Language, upon the Subject of Love, which corrupt the Hearts of Youth more than Persons are aware of; though few are wont to take notice of it.

III. The Third Species of Impurity is of the Thoughts. And it is no difficult matter to shew that impure Thoughts are sinful. Whosoever consults St. Matthew's Gospel, must needs see how expressly our Blessed Saviour affirms, || that *Whosoever* || Ch. 5. 28. *looketh on a Woman to lust after her, commits Adultery with her in his Heart*, and by consequence becomes culpable in the sight of God by these Thoughts and Desires. So our Saviour at another time

† St. Mar. teaches, † that those *Evil Desires which proceed from within, out of the Heart, defile the Man.* And his 7. 23.
 * 2 Cor. 7. Apostle St. Paul exhorts * to Purify our selves from 1.
 † Colof. 3. all Filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit; and to † Re-
 5. nounce not only the Sin of Uncleanness, but all unclean Desires. In a word, this is the Purport and Intent of all those Precepts which require to govern our Desires, and subdue our Carnal Inclinations. Though besides these there are two other Considerations which clearly prove it our Duty, to attend to and regulate our Thoughts, as well as our Words and Actions.

One is, That the Thoughts are the Source and Original from whence our other Sins take their Rise. Now it is an uncontested Principle, that whatever causes Sin, is to be avoided. And seeing irregular Desires are the Spring of sinful Actions, lascivious Glances, and unchast Words; it is therefore every one's Duty watchfully to resist these Thoughts and Desires, and to use our utmost Diligence for preventing as much as in us lies, their thrusting themselves into our Minds.

The other Consideration is, That supposing these inward Motions and Inclinations of our Heart, do not carry us on to the Crime it self, and pass no farther than the bare Desire, they will not yet fail to pollute the Soul, and breed in us contrary Dispositions to what our Religion requires of us. A Man is not properly defiled by any thing that does not come from within the Heart. But the Desires and Motions of the Soul may be sinful, though they rest there only, and never put the Body upon Action. It is in the Intention, the Desire, and the Will, that Sin chiefly has its being. Thus Covetousness consists in the Love and Desire of Riches; and Pride in the Love of Glory and Honour. And in like manner Uncleanness consists in the Love of Sensuality
 and

and carnal Pleasures. And as a Man may be Covetous or Proud without ever actually possessing the Goods or the Glory he is so fond of, so he may no less be Unclean without arriving at the very Crime. That which pollutes the Soul, and renders it guilty and miserable, is its Estrangement from God; and this is the infallible Effect of impure Thoughts. These extinguish Piety, Fervency in Prayer, and a Desire of the heavenly Treasure; and stupify and sensualize the Soul; and so much the more, by how much the more easily this Passion gets the Possession of the Heart, and employs the Phancy, and the Imagination, and suffers not the Thoughts to dwell upon other Objects, nor leaves any relish of whatever other sort of Pleasures.

And Oh that People would be persuaded seriously and attentively to consider this with themselves! The Generality of Men conclude themselves innocent, so long as they cannot charge themselves with the Crimes of Uncleaness, thinking it enough, if they can say for themselves, *I am no Adulterer, nor Fornicator.* But alas! such ought to know that Persons may be free of these Crimes, and yet may be highly blameable in the Sight of God. Nor is this all; for it is not impossible that one who has actually committed the Crime, may yet be really less culpable, than another who has never committed it. God forbid that I should pretend to flatter Sinners, or go about to extenuate the great Guilt of any that deliver themselves up to the Sin of Uncleaness: But neither may I flatter others, who though they have never been guilty of the Crime, live however in a Habit of this Passion; but must deal plainly with them, must shew them their Case as it is, and must put them in mind of the Sinfulness and Danger of the state they are in.

Let us therefore suppose a Man to have fallen into this Sin of Uncleanness, drawn into it by some violent Excess of Passion, but who immediately recovers himself after his Fall, bewails his Miscarriage, and makes the best Reparation in his Power, by a true Repentance and Holiness of Life. Let us suppose on the other hand, a Man innocent of the Crime, but who, this excepted, allows himself in all sort of Impurities, has polluted both Body and Heart by a hundred shameful Actions, by forbidden Looks, and dangerous Readings; a Man whose Eyes are always wandering, and his Soul is wrought upon and captivated by every tempting Object, his Heart, and his Imagination full of lustful Thoughts and Conceptions; who cherishes his Passions, and delights in them; and in whom they are habitually settl'd and confirm'd. Now I would ask, Whether is the more impure and the more guilty of these two? I do not in the least excuse the Crime, but it cannot possibly be denied, that the latter is in the worse Condition, howsoever he may pass for innocent amongst Men, and the other may be look'd upon as a heinous Offender.

But to make the Matter yet more plain, let us examine into it a little more narrowly. Thou sayst thou hast not committed the Crime; but tell me, What is it has hindred thee? It could not be the Fear of God, because this would no less have engaged thee to regulate thy Desires, and keep thy Heart pure. It must therefore have been, either the Want of a fit Opportunity, or some other Considerations, such as the Fear of Men, a Dread of Shame, and other ill Consequents the Crime might have expos'd thee too. The Truth is, thy Will has been entirely bent this way, thy Heart has been filled with filthy and shameful Desires, to which thou hast cheerfully

resign'd thy self. Wherefore flatter not thyself upon this account ; but remember rather that impure Thoughts and Desires are Sins, and possibly may prove very great ones.

To proceed : There are divers Species and divers Degrees of impure Thoughts, between which we are necessarily to distinguish. And to this end Enquiry is to be made, how, and by what Steps a Man falls into Sin. And so we shall find that, whether it be from the Activity of own Imagination, or from the Impression outward Objects make upon us, there first arise such Thoughts and Inclinations in our Souls as please and improve our Passions. Which unless we carefully resist upon their first Rise, the Favour we have for them will be continually gaining upon us, till at length we come to take delight in them, willingly admit them, give our Phancy free Liberty to entertain it self with them, and let them fix themselves in our Minds. By which means they grow more powerful, and we find our selves more and more easy towards them, and so they presently produce Desires, it being natural to desire what we find pleases us. Sometimes these are wandring Desires, not apply'd to any particular Object. But at othertimes they grow into a formed Design, and a Resolution and deliberate Choice. After which there wants only a convenient Opportunity for consummating the Crime. These are the Steps and Degrees of our Passions ; and by this Method of Procedure it is that they come to get the Ascendant over us ; and this oftentimes with such Readiness, and so speedily, that we are scarce sensible of it. Now each of these Degrees has its Guilt, though not all equally. From our first beginning not to reject these Thoughts, but rather give them Entertainment, the Soul begins to be defiled ; though when they grow up into Desires,

Desires, it is much more so. And if in a while they obtain the full Consent of the Will, the Temptation then has done its business; and though the Man should not dare to venture upon the Crime, either for want of Opportunity, or because he is afraid to expose himself, he is nevertheless to look upon himself as chargeable with it before God. And it is properly with respect to this Species of Lust, that our Saviour tells us,

† St. Matt.
5: 28.

† *Whosoever looketh upon a Woman to lust after her, has committed Adultery with her already in his Heart.*

Having thus discoursed of impure Thoughts, I think my self concern'd, before I quit this Subject, to take notice, that there are also an involuntary sort of Thoughts that thrust themselves into the Mind, and may seem contrary to Purity, whilst in reality they are not, and which do no harm to this Vertue, nor any way defile the Soul. Such are certain foolish, whimsical, extravagant Thoughts, which at first appearance seem lewd and detestable, and perhaps very wicked; which arise either from the simple Imagination, or from something read, or heard, or seen; or from a melancholick Disorder in the Temperature of the Body; as many find by Experience. It is not unusual to be too often interrupted and tormented with these Thoughts, even in our most serious Retirements, and in the midst of our Devotions. Insomuch that some have upon Consideration hereof, been cast into Fits of Despair and the blackest Melancholy; concluding that these being the Devil's Temptations, themselves must certainly be under the Power of this Enemy to God and Man. And this sad Estate of theirs is render'd yet more sad and dreadful, by their own Backwardness, their Shame, or Fear, to discover it to any else, because they apprehend it to be such as had never before been seen or heard of. Yet this is too

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common, and the Number of these poor Souls is far greater than People ordinarily imagine it to be.

Wherefore we must remember, that these sort of Thoughts are not to be accounted amongst those impure Thoughts I have been discoursing of. They are but what the Minds of the Best are liable to, and ought not therefore to put others into too great a Concern. And even the more strange and abominable they appear, the less reason have we to be affrighted at them. For there is no Sinfulness in any thing, but what has a Tendency to Evil, and is some way Voluntary. But the Thoughts I am speaking of are not such Temptations as invite to the commission of Sin; nor have they at all the Assent of the Will.

On the contrary, those who complain of them, are so far from consenting to them, that they abhor them, and beg and pray to be deliver'd from them. They may justly be reputed an Effect of human Frailty, and the Disorder of our Nature; but it is a gross Mistake to rank them amongst our Sins. There is more Evil in one Fit of Anger, or Unclean Desire, than in all these Thoughts, how frightful and how detestable soever they appear. And the best way therefore to get rid of them is to despise them, and not trouble ourselves about them. Some are of Opinion that they are to be opposed and resisted, and set themselves heartily to shake them off, and beg pardon for them of God, and are never at ease because of them. But it were a much wiser Course, not to be uneasy at them, nor set our selves too resolutely to contend with them; because the more we study to prevent them, the more we shall find them return upon us. And all that many have got by opposing them, is only that they have hereby fallen into a miserable Condition. These Thoughts

Thoughts are not of that Consequence that I should have esteem'd them worth mentioning, but only for the sake of such as are wont to torment themselves about them. And what I have said is said not only with relation to those Thoughts which are contrary to Purity, but in general, and of all others, as well as these, and even of those that arise against the Divinity, and against our Faith. But this I positively aver, That what I have said has no relation to such Thoughts as proceed from a corrupt and profane Heart, and a Principle of Impurity and Libertinism.

Thus I have done with what I designed to propose concerning the Sins of Fornication and Adultery, together with the other Species of Impurity.

SECTION

Thoughts

SECTION II.

Of the Effects of Uncleanness.

AFTER what has been said it cannot be doubted whether Uncleanness be a great Sin, and carefully to be avoided by all that call themselves Christians. But yet to make us the more sensible of the Evil of it, it will be requisite to consider its ill Effects in three respects; namely with relation to the State whereinto Men are brought by it, with regard to the Sins that accompany it, and in reference to the Mischiefs that follow upon it. A serious Consideration of which three Articles, will give us a full Prospect of the Heinousness and the Danger of this Sin.

CHAP. I.

Of the State to which People are brought by Uncleanness.

THE Estate to which People are brought by Uncleanness is so exceedingly deplorable, that I persuade my self, had but Persons a right Notion of it, they would be much more afraid of giving way to it. And for this Cause I shall set myself in the next place to give some account of this State. But here I must premise, that what I am about to say, is not calculated for all sorts of Unclean Persons. Some being more deeply involv'd in this Sin, and others less, it must be

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confessed they are not all equally Partakers of the ill Consequents of it. And I must therefore beseech each one to apply what I say to his own Soul, so far only as he finds himself concern'd in it, and sees he has need of it.

Now this State to which People are reduc'd by Impurity, may be consider'd these two ways, *First*, With respect to the Purity of the Soul; and, *Secondly*, with respect to the Peace of their own Consciences.

I. And it is plain the State of one given to Uncleanness, is a State of Pollution, Sin, and Misery. True Piety requires to keep the Body and the Heart pure; but the Unclean are defiled both in Body and Soul, sometimes by the Crime it self, and sometimes by other Actions contrary to Purity. Their Sensuality by being the Occasion of abundance of inordinate Inclinations in them, hurries them on to many Instances of Lewdness for satisfying this brutish Passion. But the State of the Soul is chiefly to be consider'd, whilst it is ordinarily possess'd by lustful Thoughts and Desires. The unchast Person has his Mind rarely free from lascivious and shameful Imaginations and Phancies. His Heart is a continual Spring of evil Thoughts bubbling up in it every moment; so that there needs only the Presence of an Object to inflame his Desire. Let him but see or hear any thing relating to his beloved Sin, and his Lust is presently kindled by it. And not only so, but at other times when none of these Objects present themselves, his Memory serves to furnish him with such former Passages as had gratified his Sensuality; these he recalls to his Mind, and pleases himself with the Thoughts of them, instead of reflecting upon them, as he ought, with Sorrow of Heart and Confusion of Face.

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This Passion has no sooner got the Mastery over the Heart, but forthwith it pursues the Man every where, and keeps its Possession of him at all times and in all places. Upon the most serious Occasions, and in the very Acts of Religion, he ever and anon finds himself transported with lustful Conceptions and Desires, which incessantly follow him and take up his Thoughts. I shall not need to say how great a part of Mankind find their Minds flag, and languish, and wander from their Business, and are full even of wicked Thoughts, when they should be praying to God, or hearkening to his Word. But it is certain that in many of them Impurity is the Cause of this Disorder. A Soul that is not Chast, will not know how to be Devout. To such an one the holy Exercises of Prayer, Meditation, Reading, &c. appear insipid and unpleasant. A Love of Voluptuousness is inconsistent with Spiritual Delights, and those pious Affections, and Joys, and Raptures, which accompany a sincere Holiness of Conversation.

It is undoubtedly a dreadful Case to be thus miserably deprived of the Love and Grace of God, and not allowed to enjoy any Communion with him. And it was not therefore without very good reason that St. Paul said, by Uncleanness we cease to be Members of Christ, and Temples of the Holy Ghost. The lustful Man cuts himself off from Communion with our Saviour and the Blessed Spirit, and defaces the Image of God that had been formed in himself, and bears that of the Unclean Spirit.

Which is a Condition unworthy not only of a Christian, but even of a Man. God has given to Mankind Modesty and Reason as a Check to their Passions; but Sensuality and Lust extinguish both these Endowments, and render Men like the
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brute Beaſts, which follow their own impetuous Inclinations, without any manner of Reſerve. Theſe ſenſual Paſſions divest them of their Judgment and Underſtanding; according to that of the Prophet *Hosea*, Chap. iv. 11. *Whoredom and Wine take away the Heart.* This is ſadly verified in the looſer Sett of Men, who through their Luſts are become a ſort of Brutes, whoſe Character is Folly, and who ſenſeleſſly caſt themſelves upon a thouſand Evils. Of all the Paſſions perhaps there is not one, that ſo wretchedly blinds the Eyes, as this does where it is indulged. For alas! What is it that ſuch who are transported with an immoderate Deſire and unchaſt Love, will ſtick at? Either they don't take notice of the great number of Evils, whereto they expoſe themſelves, or if they do, are nevertheleſs reſolved to venture upon them. They will attempt Impoſſibilities for the Gratification of their Luſt, will dare to be made wretched Vagabonds, will ſquander away their Eſtates, will forfeit their Honours, will diſgrace their Families, and bring upon themſelves inevitable Miſery, in ſpight of all that can be ſaid or done to the contrary. And ſtill ſo much the more lamentable is their Caſe, by how much the harder it is to reclaim them, when once they are thoroughly habituated to their Impurity. Whiſt their Inclination grows daily ſtronger and ſtronger, their Diſpoſition to Good is naturally and inevitably impair'd, and their Vice becomes ſo fixed that nothing can root it out. Or if any imagine that Age will wear it off, beſides what I have to offer hereafter againſt this, I muſt at preſent obſerve that it is not always ſo, but there are Multitudes of aged Sinners, who burn with this impure Fire, and whoſe Age does not at all render them either the Wiſer, or the more Chaſt.

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II. Next we are to consider the Unclean Person's Estate with respect to the Peace of his own Conscience. And so we shall find him always Uneasy, or which is worse, given up to a Hardness of Heart.

1. A Purity of Soul is necessarily required in order to Peace of Mind; the contrary Disposition naturally breeds Trouble and Disquiet. That Tranquillity and Satisfaction which the innocent Soul enjoys, belongs not to them who are transported with sensual and lustful Desires.

The Impure, especially those who are guilty of the Crime, are in continual Fear of Men, lest their Wickedness come to be discovered; they dread those that are privy to it, and so have it in their power to make it known; they distrust all others; and even their own selves. Nor is it any strange thing for guilty Persons to betray themselves, and discover their own Crimes, either through Inconsideration, or in their Sleep, or in a Fit of Raving, or some other way.

But supposing them to be in no apprehension from Man, but that they are able to conceal their Miscarriages from all that are about them, they cannot hide them from their own Consciences, nor avoid being reproached by them; but will at every turn be struck with a Sense of the dreadful Condition they are in, and fear and tremble because of it. It is often seen, from time to time, and even in the midst of their forbidden Pleasures, that the Delight they take in satisfying their Lusts, is attended with Bitterness and cruel Remorse. The vilest Sensualist cannot forbear thinking sometimes, that he must die and be bereaft of these Objects of his Passion. It is true these Reflexions oftentimes pass away like Lightning, and the Man contrives some Method of lulling them asleep, and delivering himself from the Disturbance of them,

them, at least for a while; but then it frequently happens, that they return and fill him with Confusion; as particularly in the time of Sickness, or at the Hour of Death. Then Conscience is terribly awaken'd, the Miscarriages of Men's Lives come then into their Minds, and inexpressible Consternation takes hold of them.

2. But the Unclean Person is not always in such Perplexity, but sometimes is deliver'd up to a State of Security, and Hardness of Heart. And this Hardness is twofold. For as there are two things in Sin, the Sin itself, or the Fault committed, and the Punishment consequent upon it; so are there two sorts of Hardness; the one when the Sinner is not affected with a Sense of his Wickedness, the other when he regards not the Punishment of it.

1. The impure Person very often has either no Sense at all of his Sin, or at least, but a very weak and feeble one. This has happen'd to some of the grossest Offenders, whose Security, after so many Provocations, has been very wonderful. There are such whose Conscience might reasonably be expected to be to them a Hell upon Earth, considering how their Life has been little else than a continu'd Series of Incontinence, Pollution, and Uncleanness; their Youth has been entirely sensual, their Practices since have been very shameful, and they have given themselves up to their inordinate Passions of the Flesh; and yet they live at Ease, and in Mirth and Jollity. Now it is possible they may be much more so in Appearance, than they are in Reality, since none can look in to their Hearts to see how they stand affected there. Yet it must be owned they are sometimes insensible of their Condition, and so are at Ease within themselves, and feel none of that Remorse and Dread I am speaking of. And this is especially the

the Case of those who have long habituated themselves to love their Sin, and despise the Admonitions of Conscience ; till by degrees they come to be no longer restrained by any Scruples, or any inward Remorse, and can sin boldly and without Fear ; much like those lustful and licentious Pagans, of whom St. Paul speaks, *Who being past feeling, had given themselves over to Lasciviousness, to work all Uncleaness with greediness, and whom God gave up to their own vile Affections.* In truth it seemed hard that those to whom the Gospel has been preached, should ever arrive at such a height of Insensibility and Stupidity. Yet there are Professors of our Religion, who in this respect fall very little short of the Pagans. There are unhappy Christians, who have in a manner lost all Sense of Religion, and all Notions of Virtue, and are even ready to undertake the Defence of their Impieties.

2. But that we may the better apprehend to what a measure of Security some of these Sinners may attain, it is farther to be observed, That as they are not sensible of their Sin, so neither are they oftentimes of the Punishment of it ; such Punishment I mean as befalls them by reason of it, in this present Life. Sometimes one may perceive the Judgments of God hanging over the Heads of the Unchast, and threatening to fall upon them ; sometimes actually and visibly pursuing them, in their own Persons, or in their Relations, or their Affairs in the World, making them groan under the Miseries, Sorrows, and divers Evils they have brought upon themselves ; and yet we may see how little Sense they have of the Reason why these sad Afflictions are laid upon them, and how ready they are to attribute their Misfortunes to any other Cause rather than to themselves ; some of them continuing in their Security, till the Judgment of

God feizes them, and they die in their Impenitence. Which is the moſt deplorable, and moſt dangerous State a Man can fall into. For ſo long as the Sinner has a Senſe of his Guilt, and the Vengeance juſtly due to him for it, there is ſome hope of him ; but when he is come to this degree of Obduracy, there is very little to be expected from him, for he is then upon the very Brink of Miſery, and but one Step from everlaſting Deſtruction.

But methinks I hear ſome plead, That it is not the Fate of all Unclean Perſons to be thus harden'd in their Wickedneſs, but that ſome of them repent and are converted, that their Sins may be blotted out. And this is what I willingly own. But then, beſides that there is ſome reaſon to queſtion whether all that ſeem to be reclaim'd, are really and truly ſo, as I ſhall ſhew hereafter ; beſides this I ſay, I answer, that all who are Unclean do not thus repent ; and every one therefore ſhould dread the indulging himſelf in this Luſt, leſt ſo he fall into a State of Impenitence, as he has too apparent Reaſon to expect he ſhall. His ſinning Wilfully, and ſearching for Eviſions whereby to encourage himſelf in his Sin, and to perſuade himſelf he incurs no great Danger by it, is the natural and moſt likely Means of Security.

Yet beſides this I have ſomething more to add, which very well deſerves to be conſider'd, and will farther evidence how exceedingly dreadful that State is to which Perſons reduce themſelves by Impurity. For admitting that thoſe who have committed this Sin, or at leaſt who are addicted to Uncleanneſs, though they have not actually committed it, do riſe again by Repentance, their Caſe however is very ſad and uncomfortable upon theſe two Accounts.

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1. The Impression that has been made upon them by their lustful and carnal Inclinations will for a long time after expose them to Temptation and the Danger of returning to their former evil Courses. Habits of Sin are not extirpated all at once, especially such as are attended with sensual Pleasure and Delight. There is more Difficulty than Men are ordinarily aware of, in correcting a vicious Temper and Disposition, and checking the Motions which naturally arise either in Body or Soul, after a long Custom of sinning. It is not near so easy as People phancy to disengage themselves of those Sins, which are almost inseparably fix'd in their Imaginations, and gratify their Sensitive Faculties, and with the Thoughts of which they are wont to please themselves. The Representation and Remembrance of these Lusts continues for a long time, still polluting the Soul, instead of working in them a hearty Sorrow and true Repentance. What miserable Wretches then must they be, who have spent perhaps the greatest part of their Life in these impure Passions, and have not yet got the Mastery over their Senses, nor learn'd to mortify their Bodies by a long and sincere Repentance!

2. But this is not all. For though they should be able to surmount these Inconveniences, they must yet expect to have their Conscience reprove them as long as they live. Though the truly penitent Sinner may assure himself of obtaining the Pardon of his Sins, he will always bear about him a Remembrance of them, which will exceedingly afflict him, and cover him with Confusion. And so much the more nearly will these Reflections affect him, by how much the more Penitent he is. Oh, What Sorrow and Anguish of Mind must it cause in him, to look back upon the time wherein he had forsaken his God, and bethink himself of

the Extravagance and Licentiousness of his younger Days, and all the Sins he has either committed himself, or has occasion'd others to commit ! Not to add any thing here of his Doubts concerning the Nature and Validity of his Repentance, whether it be sincere and effectual, and such as is required in order to the Forgiveness his of past Transgressions.

The natural Result of which Considerations is, That the Estate to which Persons reduce themselves by this Sin, is very disconsolate and afflicting. And this will farther appear, if we proceed to consider the several other Sins wherewith it is accompanied.

CH A P. II.

Of the Sins which accompany Uncleanness.

THIS Consideration that Uncleanness is one of those Sins which never go alone, but have a Train of others perpetually attending them, is of great Use for proving the Heinousness of this Vice. And this I come now to treat of, chiefly with respect to those that are guilty of the Crime ; but so as that all who are impure in any other manner, or have an Inclination to Impurity, may justly apply it seriously to themselves.

Now the Sins which here fall under our Consideration, as accompanying Impurity, are of two sorts. Some of which precede the Crime, and others ensue upon it.

I. It is certain, in the first place, that People do not usually fall into this Crime, without being chargeable with certain other previous Transgressions of their Duty. This is true of the generality

lity of Unclean Persons, and there are very few Exceptions to it to be met with.

1. Uncleanneſs almoſt always ſprings from Ignorance, Idleneſs, Irreligion, and Senſuality; thoſe who pollute themſelves by this infamous Sin, or ſet their Hearts upon the Luſts of the Fleſh, being for the moſt part, ſuch as for want of a good Education and Inſtruction in their Childhood, have little Underſtanding in Matters of Religion; or elſe are Profane and Libertines; or have but little Senſe of Piety and the Fear of God, and are very looſe in the whole Tenor of their Converſation, and live in the Neglect of Prayer and the other Exerciſes of Devotion; or are Idle, Lazy, Senſual, and Lovers of Pleaſures. Theſe are the Qualities which involve People, and eſpecially in the Heat of Youth, in Uncleanneſs, as ſhall be fully proved, when I come to enquire into the Sources of this Sin.

2. But there are other Sins likewise which precede this whereof I am now ſpeaking; ſuch as impure Thoughts and Deſires, immodeſt Paſſions and Inclinations, an unreſerved and blameable Familiarity, unchaſt Looks, Actions, and Diſcourſe; and in a Word all that this Paſſion ordinarily produces in them who are under its Influence. Whereto let it be added, That for the Satisfaction of this brutal Paſſion, a thouſand unlawful Contrivances are made uſe of, Solicitations, artful Inſinuations, Lyes, Proteſtations, and even Oaths for the Confirmation of their Promiſes, which yet they at length take liberty to violate. Sometimes they venture to commit great and grievous Crimes, for facilitating their way to the accompliſhment of their Deſigns, and getting rid of ſuch Perſons as might otherwiſe be an Obſtruction to them. They will not ſtick to ſacrifice their Wealth, their Reputation, and all that

is dear to them, not excepting their Religion and their Conscience, to this infamous Passion. Thus they pass through Diversity of other Sins before they arrive at what they principally aimed at. Before they come to be Fornicators or Adulterers, they are first Profane and Impious, their Bodies and their Souls are defiled and infected, and they have parted with their Chastity, and their Religion; so that the Crime is only an Addition of certain Degrees to that Impurity which they had before contracted.

What I have here said particularly affects two sorts of Persons, it being plain from hence that,
1. Many who have never yet dared to commit the Crime, are not however to look upon themselves as innocent; because they are highly culpable in giving way to those Sins which lead to the Crime, howsoever they have not yet ventured upon the Crime it self. 2. Those who have unhappily fallen into the Crime ought to be sensible that they are much more blameable than possibly they take themselves to be, and that their Sin of Uncleanness is not all they are chargeable with, but they have many others to answer for, which render them very criminal before God. Let them therefore call to mind what has preceded their Fall, let them recollect the manner of their past Behaviour, and what it was that brought them to this Crime, let them examine their Life, and their Conscience, with relation to the other Duties of Religion, and they will find themselves to have been perfect Strangers to Godliness, and that their Conversation has been little else than one continu'd Series of Indevotion and Licentiousness. If all that are guilty would weigh this well with themselves, they would have quite a different Notion of their Sin; especially if hereto they subjoin the Consideration of those other Iniquities that are the most common Effects of it. II. For

II. For the Truth is, there are divers sorts of Sins consequent upon Uncleanneſs.

1. Thoſe who are guilty of it, at leaſt a great part of them, continue in the Commiſſion of the ſame Crimes. The Difficulty of this Sin ſhews it ſelf chiefly in the beginning, and when the firſt Step is taken, they thenceforward ſin more boldly, and are leſs upon their guard againſt it. On the one hand, their Paſſion gets head, and their luſtful Inclinations grow more prevalent; and on the other, Modeſty and the Fear of God wear off. At firſt they ſin with ſome Reluctancy, and they find for ſometime a Struggle within themſelves; but when once they have paſſed their known Bounds, they are little concerned for whatever they do afterwards. Having begun to enter upon a ſinful Familiarity, they ordinarily proceed accordingly, perſevering in their Sin as long as they are able, unleſs they meet with ſome Impediment to prevent it; and yet then they only divert their Paſſion to ſome other Object.

2. They not only continue in this Sin, but proceed to groſſer Inſtances of it. From one Fault they go on to another, and according as the Number of their Sins increaſes, they are proportionably greater and more enormous. Incontinence has it in its Power to caſt Men headlong into the utmoſt Exceſs; it is a bottomleſs Gulph, that never can be filled; a Fire that kindles and burns more violently according to the Quantity of Fuel that is heaped upon it. And hence the Debauchee being transported by his own brutiſh Paſſions, ſets himſelf to find out new Methods of ſatisfying his Luſt, and when he has found them, ſoon grows weary of theſe too, and is as much at a loſs for others, which yet in a while pleaſe him no better than the former. It fares with him as with the Drunkard, who when Cuſtom of Drinking has

render'd his Wine so familiar to him that he thinks it not strong enough, seeks out for other Liquors, and not long after as much despises these. Fornication paves the way to Adultery, and sometimes to what is more flagitious. This gives birth to those horrible Crimes which are not fit to be named, which brought Destruction upon *Sodom*, and its neighbouring Cities, and provoked Almighty God to exterminate the *Canaanites*; as *St. Paul* speaks *Rom. i. 21. 24.* where he tells us of the Heathens, that *having their foolish Hearts darkened, God also gave them up to Uncleanness, through the Lusts of their own Hearts, to dishonour their own Bodies between themselves.* When we reflect upon the Abominations of these Heathens, and of the ancient *Canaanites*, and read the Laws which the Almighty saw fit to give the People of *Israel* upon this account, and which are contained in the eighteenth Chapter of *Leviticus*, and moreover observe the execrable Abominations that are yet committed, not only amongst the Infidels, but amongst such as call themselves Christians, and in Countries that have naturally an Abhorrence of such beastly Lusts, it is wonderful to think that Persons endu'd with Reason, and who moreover make Profession of Christianity, should be capable of such horrible Impieties. However this lets us see to what Excesses Men are carried by their Lusts, and what are the Consequences of Impurity.

3. Besides these dreadful Instances of Incontinence, Impurity makes way for divers other Sins; it being ordinary to endeavour the concealing of this Sin by the Commission of new ones of other kinds. Thus *David* became guilty of Murder, in hope to prevent the Discovery of his Adultery, by treacherously contriving the Death of his faithful Subject *Uriah*. I cannot here take notice of all the Courses Unclean Persons resort to, to the

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end their Vices may never come to the Knowledge of the World, some of them being too horrid to be mention'd. They destroy their own Infants sometimes before, and sometimes after their Birth. Or if these Infants, the Fruits of their Impurity, don't lose their Lives, they are usually cast off; and those who have brought them into the World, mind not how they are dispos'd of, their only Care being to get rid of them; nor are they concern'd for what becomes either of their Bodies, or of their Souls. Which is one of the most crying Sins they can possibly be guilty of, a Sin whose Enormity cannot be sufficiently expressed; and yet with which vast Numbers of Persons, especially of the Men, load their Consciences.

4. Uncleanness is very frequently followed by Tricking and Unfaithfulness. Nothing is more common with such as practice it, than to make use of Promises and Oaths in order to effecting their lewd Designs, and afterwards to break these Oaths and Promises, and so to become guilty of Perjury and Perfidiousness. I will not take occasion here to say any thing of the crying Acts of Injustice that are done to, and the Disturbances that happen in Families, by means of Adultery, because I have already touch'd upon them in the foregoing Chapters.

5. The Crimes in which Unclean Persons involve themselves upon the Discovery of their Wickedness come next to be considered; that instead of confessing their Guilt, they deny it, they lye, and this with the most solemn Protestations and Oaths. They seek to justify themselves by the most indirect Means; and in those places where the Laws condemn and punish Impurity, they study by Trick, and Artifice, and all sort of undue Evasions to elude the Force of the Laws and the Strictness of Discipline. They are ordinarily avowed

avowed Enemies to all Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline and Order ; and ſet up with all their might for a Liberty to live as they pleaſe ; and whereſoever they are able they will not fail to compaſs ſuch their Deſign. And for this reaſon it is that the Laws which were made againſt this Vice have been abrogated in many places, or at leaſt are grown into Diſuſe.

6. Uncleanneſs, if perſiſted in, gradually ſtifles all Senſe of Religion and Conſcience. Of which King *Salomon* was a famous Example, whoſe ſtrange Wives prevailed upon him to forſake his God, and ſerve the Idols of the Nations round about him. And now in our own days it is ordinarily to be obſerved, that Perſons ſacrifice their Religion to this brutiſh Paſſion, changing their Church or Party, purely for the gratifying their ſenſual Deſires. Oftentimes they grow profeſſed Libertines and Abettors of Impiety, and ſo add Impudence and Shameleſneſs to their Impurity, and ſcoff at Religion, and undertake to defend their Crime. Becauſe they find themſelves condemn'd by the Doctrines of Religion, and that it were happy for them if they had no Judgment to undergo after this Life, they make it their buſineſs to perſwade themſelves, that they need fear nothing of this nature. They call the moſt undoubted Truths into queſtion, and diligently ſearch for, and greedily entertain whatever may ſerve to confirm them in theſe wicked Principles. They are taken with thoſe ſenſeleſs Eviſions wherewith the Atheiſts and bold Wits ſet themſelves to oppoſe the Doctrines of Religion. Any Appearance of Difficulty, either in relation to ſome Paſſages of the ſacred Hiſtory, or as to the Difference that is between Good and Evil, paſſes with them for an unanſwerable Argument, and is a Reaſon for their turning Atheiſts, at leaſt as far as they are able.

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7. It is peculiarly to be noted, that Offenders in this kind do not sin alone, but involve others in the same Guilt with themselves. For whether they be the Tempters, or the Tempted, they are in either Case accountable for the Danger incurred not only by themselves, but likewise by the Partners in their Wickedness; since we are all equally obliged, as not to seduce our Neighbours, so neither to suffer our selves to be seduced by them, but on the other hand to endeavour, as much as in us lies, to reclaim them from Sin. And yet the Unchast have another more direct and more pernicious way of promoting the Destruction of their Accomplices, by enticing them to cover their Guilt by still more villainous Attempts; such as exposing their Children, murdering them, telling Lies, and making false Declarations and false Oaths. The last of which is a Crime of so dreadful a nature, that Perjury is not only one of the greatest Sins any one can be drawn into, but those who are guilty of it, seldom fail of persisting in it to their Death; and dying in it, must be inevitably ruined to all Eternity. And let who will be Judge that has any Sense of Religion left in him, how heinous a Provocation it must be, to have been instrumental in order to the Damnation of another, it may be of many, and what a Load must lie upon the Consciences of all such. Though one of the Parties should afterwards sincerely repent of his Fault, and resolve to make all the Reparation in his Power, he may however expect to be continually tormented with cruel Regret and Remorse, and a constant Uneasiness for the Hazard of his Partner's Salvation; especially where there is just ground to fear such an one died in an impenitent state.

8. And yet once more: The Loss and Damnation of the Children born of these unlawful Mixtures

tures is yet to be consider'd. For they are not only often sent abroad to perish by War, or in foreign Countries ; but besides through want of Education, and by reason of their unhappy Circumstances in other respects, they generally grow very lewd, and so ruine themselves. The Sins of those also are to be taken notice of in this place, who are prevailed with to assist these impure Persons in either the Commission or the Concealment of their Wickedness ; as likewise are the Vices which creep into Families, where either of the Parents live in Uncleannefs. For there Sensuality, Gluttony, Love of Pleasures, Idleness, Sloth, Divisions, Quarrels, Indevotion and Impiety are usually very rampant. And as if this were not bad enough, an ill Management of the Family-Concerns, a bad Education, and as bad Example, too commonly transmit these Vices to Posterity. The Children frequently tread in their Parents Steps, and by this means ruine themselves, if not always, yet very commonly. To conclude, if to what is here said, be added the Scandal these Wretches give, and the Mischief they do, by their bad Lives, as well as by their loose Discourse, it must be owned that they are not only the Authors of their own Destruction, but that divers others also fall and perish together with them.

Thus I have instanced in some of those Crimes which are consequent upon Impurity. Some of them I say, for a great deal more might be urged upon this Subject, that I have not meddled with. But from what has been said, what Opinion should every one have of a Sin, that draws so many others after it, and brings such inevitable Destruction upon the Actors and Abettors of it ? These Reflexions should raise in all an utter Abhorrence of so vile a Practice, but above all should effectually engage such as are already immersed in it, to think

think seriously with themselves, how they may speedily get safe out of it. This is a very sad and a very dangerous State, and whosoever is at any time taken in its Snares, will find a hearty Repentance necessary in order to his Recovery out of them. I am sensible this Sin does not hurry all that allow themselves in it, upon all the other Iniquities I have mentioned; the Effects of it not being always the same, but more fatal in some than they are in others. Yet it is not to be thought that any can indulge themselves herein, without incurring the Guilt of several other Sins with it. It is each one's Business now after all to examine Himself in relation to what is here said, and to see how far Himself may be concerned in it.

C H A P. III.

Of the Evils and Punishments consequent upon Uncleanness.

I Come now to the Evils and Punishments consequent upon Impurity. And these again, as the Sins that accompany it, are twofold. The Punishments which God inflicts upon it in this World, and those that he reserves for the other Life.

I. Almighty God has sometimes punished this Sin by extraordinary Judgments in this World, and with the most exemplary Severity of any mention'd in the whole sacred History. The Crimes of those who inhabited the Old World, and were destroy'd by the Deluge, took their Rise from the lustful Inclinations of the Flesh. Moses tells us, *Gen. vi. 2. That the Sons of God saw the Daughters of Men that they were fair, and they took them Wives of*
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all which they chose; and this introduced into the World that terrible Corruption of Manners, and those notorious Crimes, which provoked Almighty God to destroy very near the whole Race of Mankind. Since the Deluge we have no more eminent Example of the Divine Vengeance upon a People, than the Overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, and the other Cities that were consumed by Fire from Heaven, together with all their Inhabitants, and the whole Country round about. But it was the Licentiousness and Sensuality of the People of this Country, which brought upon them these dreadful Effects of God's Indignation. After these we have it recorded of the *Israelites*, that

† Numb.
25. 9.

* 1 Cor.
10. 6, 7, 8.

they perished in the Wilderness †, to the number of Twenty and four thousand Persons, because they had been drawn into Uncleanness and Idolatry, by the Daughters of *Moab*; an Example which *St. Paul* sets before the *Corinthians* *, to fright them from these same Sins. All those Examples are evident Proofs of the Detestation in which Almighty God has this Sin. In like manner *St. Peter* and *St. Jude* alledge them to shew that God did not fail to punish the Lustful and Lascivious. 2 *St. Pet.* ii. 4, &c. and *St. Jude* 7, 8.

|| 2 Sam.
12. 10.

To these Examples of the Wrath of God against whole Nations, may be added those Judgments which he has also executed upon particular Persons. And it is observed of *David*, that after he fell into this Crime, many Misfortunes befel himself and his Family ||, as the Prophet *Nathan* had threaten'd; namely the Death of his Child, the tragick Events that ensu'd upon his Son *Amnon's* Crime, and *Absolom's* Conspiracy and Rebellion. The like might also be noted of his Son *Salomon*. After the Love of Women had drawn him aside, the Divine Protection visibly departed from him, as we see, 1 *Kings* 11.

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These terrible Punishments, thus related in the Holy Scriptures, shew fully how God detests Impurity; without any necessity of his repeating in these Days the like Examples of his Indignation. Yet there are ordinary Judgments which are seen to light upon the Unchast. There are vast Numbers of Persons and Families, who are unhappy, and ruin'd, whose Misery cannot be reckoned other than an Effect of God's Vengeance against this Sin, punishing it with Shame, Grief, Poverty, and all sort of Misfortunes. It is true these Evils are not the proper Punishments of this Sin; but rather to be esteemed an Effect of the Goodness of God towards Men. They are only Chastisements in order to the Reformation of Offenders, to make them sensible of their Sin, and careful to avoid the Torments of the Life to come. But they are withal most effectual Examples for teaching People not to indulge themselves in Sensuality.

Which they cannot ordinarily do, without shaming and dishonouring themselves. Though it is true this is not the Case of all, and that this Punishment reaches none whose ill Conduct is not publicly taken notice of. There are many who conceal their Guilt, and so pass amongst Men for innocent. But yet Disgrace and Shame rarely fail of being the Portion of the Dissolute.

Moreover this Sin exposes to Grief and Want; and many, though not every one, are punished in this manner, so plainly that it is not easy to reflect upon their sufferings without being forced to confess, that there is a particular Curse of God hanging over this Crime. The Excesses of Incontinence leave behind them Sickneses and Infirmities, which naturally cause Sorrow and Shame, and which frequently accompany them even to the Grave. There is no Sin by which a Man is

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reduc'd to ſuch a State, as they are reduc'd to who deliver themſelves up to this, nor that has the like terrible Effect upon the Body. So that even in this Senſe that of St. Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 18. may juſtly be applied, that *He who commits Fornication ſins againſt his own Body*. Almighty God who has made all things with the greateſt Wiſdom, has annexed divers Evils to the immoderate Uſe of bodily Pleaſures; and chiefly with this Deſign, that Impurity ſhould have ſuch terrible Conſequences, to the end they may lay a Reſtraint upon People, and not let them give way to a Paſſion that is exceeding prevalent with thoſe it gets the Poſſeſſion of. And again, beſides theſe great Evils, there are likewiſe divers Infirmities that are the Conſequents of Incontinence. Sobriety and Chaſtity preſerve the Health, and prolong the Life, above all other Methods; and then it muſt follow by the Rule of Contraries, that Laſciviouſneſs and Senſuality ſhorten the Days, and are the Occaſion of many Diſeaſes. The Cauſes of many Diſtempers are very hardly diſcover'd; nor can the moſt ſkilful Phyſician inform himſelf whence they have ariſen; which yet if the Truth were known, would appear to be the Effect of Impurity.

In like manner the Guilty of this Vice fall very often into Poverty and Miſery, as a Curſe naturally conſequent upon their Sin. There is no manner of Difficulty, in ſhewing how the Unchaſt impoveriſh themſelves; that they ordinarily ſacrifice all to their Paſſion, they contrive divers ways of ſquandering away their Eſtates; and particularly that a conſiderable Part goes for promoting their infamous Deſigns, and then again for concealing their Crime, and to prevent its taking air. They are great Prodigals as to what their Luſt demands for its Satisfaction; and are moſt commonly idle, dainty, effeminate, intemperate, proud, and Lovers

vers of good Entertainment. As Sobriety and Fasting are good Preservatives against Uncleanneſs, this Vice on the other hand has for its Companions Drunkenneſs and Gluttony. The Unclean are moreover negligent of their own Affairs, and if they have an Employment, will not be perſuaded to ſtick duly to it. By which means they cannot but waſt what they have, and bring themſelves and their Families into Straits; after this manner verifying the Saying of the Wiſeman, Prov. vi. 26. *By means of a whoriſh Woman a Man is brought to a piece of Bread*; and that of Job, xxxi. 12. *Lust is a Fire that conſumeth to Deſtruction, and roots out all the Increaſe*. As the Son of Syrach alſo affirms, that *he that cleaveth to Harlots, ſhall have Moths and Worms to his Heritage*, Ecclus. xix. 3.

And ſtill there are more Miſchiefs to be born in the Families where this Vice reigns, that is to ſay, the Breach it makes betwixt Husband and Wife, and all the Miſfortunes that neceſſarily follow upon ſuch a Breach. The ill Conduct of either Father or Mother is enough to put all into Confuſion. Nay, even the bare Suſpicion of either Party's being faulty, will cauſe incurable Diviſions in Families. Whence ariſes alſo another Evil not to be paſſed over in ſilence, and which deſerves to be look'd upon as a particular Curſe of God; I mean, that theſe Evils, Shame, Grief, Poverty, &c. don't terminate only in the guilty Perſons, but their Poſterity after them feel the ill Effects of them. Their Children are ſlighted, and ſickly, and poor, and miſerable, not for their own, but their Parents ſake. Thus whole Families are often ruin'd, and the Seed of the Adulterers falls almoſt always into Diſtreſs. I add farther, That the Children whoſe Fathers or Mothers are this way addicted, are for the moſt part prone to imitate them herein. Which comes to

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pass partly from a natural Reason, because the Children partaking of the same Temper and Constitution with those from whom under God they receiv'd their Being, will be influenc'd likewise by the same Passions; and partly by means of their bad Education, and the ill Examples they have constantly before their Eyes, it being impossible for them, whilst in these Circumstances, not to behold and observe many Passages which will be as a most dangerous Poyson to them. They are bred up in Idleness and Intemperance, which brings them to Poverty, and that Poverty tempts them to I know not how many other Sins. Which Considerations shew plainly how the Unchast involve their Children, no less than themselves, in Misfortunes of all kinds. And so we have seen one Part of the Evils which follow Uncleanness in this Life, and of which every Day furnishes us with Examples.

II. And if these Evils hitherto insisted upon are evident Signs of the Divine Indignation against the Unchast, how ought they to stand in awe of those other more inevitable, and more intolerable Punishments which are reserved for the other Life. The Unclean are not always punished in this World, but they will be most certainly in the other, unless they take care to prevent it by a timely and hearty Reformation. This the holy Scripture teaches as expressly as may be. St. Paul professes, as I have already noted, 1 Cor. vi. 9. 11: that *neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor the Abominable, shall inherit the Kingdom of God*; cautioning also at the same time, that we don't abuse ourselves, nor flatter ourselves in this respect. And the same Doctrine he repeats, Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. *I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they who commit such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* So Ephes. v. 6. *Let no Man deceive you*

you with vain Words ; for because of these things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, Chap. xiii. 4. God, says the Apostle, will judge the Fornicators and Adulterers. And St. Peter, 2 Ep. Chap. ii. 9. declares and proves by many Examples, that God reserves the Wicked, and chiefly the Carnal and Impure, unto the Day of Judgment, to be punished. But I shall have another Occasion to enlarge upon this Judgment, and these Punishments. What is already said suffices to shew, that Impurity exposes Men to the Miseries of Damnation.

These are the Consequents of Uncleanness ; this is that dreadful State to which it brings Men, and these the Sins into which it drives them, and the Punishments to which it renders them obnoxious. And one would think them enough to inspire all Persons with a Detestation of this Vice. I am sure every one has reason to dread the Thoughts of falling into that Brutishness and Hardness of Heart, of which all are in great Danger, who at any time pass the Bounds of Modesty, and part with their Chastity. And all should therefore seriously study, to prevent that Remorse, which sooner or later will be the Portion of the Lascivious, and to keep at a Distance from a Sin that draws so many others after it, and in a Word, casts its Slaves and Votaries into an Abyss of Evils.

SECTION III.

Of the Causes of Uncleanness.

HERE I am to enquire whence it comes to pass that this Vice is so common. And in general it may be affirmed, that this is owing to Men's natural Inclinations, and the Passions which draw them into it. But now as Christians have Instructions and Motives for withholding them from Uncleanness, and our gracious God vouchsafes us the most efficacious Means, the most powerful Assistance, and the most proper Remedies, for enabling us to overcome our Passions, and this one in particular ; so is it just matter of Admiration, how it comes to pass that they profit no more by these Advantages, and that Uncleanness reigns so exceedingly amongst us. This therefore is what I propound to my self to examine into in this Section.

C H A P. I.

The First Cause, Ignorance.

† Eph. 4.
18, 19.

THE first Cause of the Prevalency of this Vice is Ignorance. St. Paul ascribed † the Extravagances of the Heathens, and particularly the Impurity of their Lives, to the Ignorance in which they lived. And the same is no less true of too great a part of those who profess themselves Christians ; namely that they are not acquainted

quainted with the Doctrines of Religion as they ought to be. And yet their Ignorance appears greater in relation to this Vice than others; and this possibly they are the least caution'd against of all Sins. To keep People at a distance from any Sin, they should be taught the Nature and the Heinousness of it, and should have set before their Eyes the Arguments and Reasons there are for dissuading from it, together with the most effectual Means of guarding themselves against it. But these things have been too rarely insisted upon with relation to Uncleaness. So that People do not rightly understand wherein this Sin consists; and therefore conclude themselves innocent, if they have never been guilty of Fornication or Adultery. All those other Species of Impurity, spoken of before, pass with them for nothing, or as next to nothing; whether in their Actions, their Looks, their Desires, or their Words, and how contrary soever to Chastity. And not knowing the Evil that is in these Courses, they make no Scruple of them, and so become Slaves to this Passion, before they are aware of it.

Neither do they well know the Heinousness and Consequences of this Sin. For certainly had they a right Notion of these; did they truly lay before themselves the Estate to which Men are reduced by it, the Sins into which it betrays them, the Misfortunes it brings upon them, and what is to be done for the Cure of it, they would become much more cautious, and not dare to take such Liberty of gratifying their sensual Inclinations. The Gospel sets before us the most powerful Motives to Chastity, teaching that Almighty God has strictly commanded it, that we are continually in his Presence, and he sees and observes our Behaviour at all times and in all places, that we have taken upon us the Profession of a pure
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and holy Religion, and have at our Baptiſm oblig'd our ſelves in the moſt ſolemn manner to live up to its Principles, that we muſt ſhortly die, and muſt come to Judgment for our Offences in this kind as well as all our other Iniquities, that there is an incomparable Reward, an immortal Crown of Glory to be loſt by this Sin; and not only ſo, but eternal, everlaſting Agonies in the bottomleſs Pit will be the undoubted Portion of thoſe that perſiſt in it. We are alſo directed to the moſt effectual Aſſiſtances and Means of ſubduing the Temptations of the Fleſh, ſuch as Prayer, Meditation, Watchfulneſs, Sobriety, Faſting, and Mortification, and the Grace of the Holy Spirit of God, which he is ready to vouchſafe to all that humbly beg it of him, and which oftentimes aſſiſts us even before we have ſought for it. All which weighty Conſiderations duly impreſſ'd upon Men's Minds by good Inſtruction, would not ſuffer them to abandon themſelves to the Exceſſes of Senſuality, as now they do. But whiſt ſo great a Part of Mankind are groſſly ignorant of theſe Doctrines, it is the leſs to be wonder'd that Impurity is ſo prevalent as Experience ſadly ſhews it to be.

Now if it be enquir'd how People come to be ſo ignorant of what ſo nearly concerns them, theſe two Cauſes of it may chiefly be aſſign'd.

I. The Negligence of thoſe who ought to teach them better; and more eſpecially of Parents, and thoſe that are ſet over them in the Church. I ſhall preſently conſider the Caſe of Parents, and the Education of their Children. In the mean time my Buſineſs is to ſhew that thoſe who are ordain'd in the Church for the Inſtruction of Chriſtians, do not all take due care for their Information in this Point, and to ſet them at diſtance enough from Impurity. It is true they take occaſion
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sometimes to speak against it in their Sermons, and to condemn and dissuade from the Practice of it ; but then they ordinarily do it in too loose and general Terms, and do not descend to Particulars, as would, at least in some Cases be proper, to make their Auditors understand what this Sin is, and how offensive in the Sight of God, and what Course is to be taken for delivering them from, or recovering any of them out of it. Nor indeed are all of them qualified to treat of so nice and tender a Subject as this is, where without a solid Judgment and a great Measure of Prudence, it can hardly be but a Man will say either too much, or not enough.

2. In the second place, where these vocal Instructions are wanting, it may be concluded that Recourse should be had to Books ; but the Misery is, that whosoever seeks for relief this way, will find himself deceiv'd for want of a sufficient Supply. There are very few Books adapted for People's Instruction in this Case. And I must confess it is somewhat strange, that this being one of the most common Sins, there has yet been so little publish'd against it. I do not at all question but the Reason why so little Pains has been taken this way, whether in the Pulpit, or by private Instruction, or by Writing, is because of the shameful Nature of the Sin. Yet it is not impossible that People might without breach of Modesty have been better taught concerning it, than they generally have been. Some certain Rules for avoiding it might have been prescrib'd the younger sort, whereby to beget in them a Niceness of Conscience in relation to it ; without descending to such Particulars as it is not fit to mention to Persons of their Age. And would but their Teachers apply themselves seriously and diligently to this, they would not find their Endeavours

yours unsuccessful. Though for want of such Application their People's Ignorance must inevitably be very great, and their Sin very common.

CH A P. II.

The Second Cause of Uncleanness,

Bad Education.

A Second Cause of this Vice is a Want of good Education. Youth is a time in which Care should be taken to caution against all Sins, but in an especial manner against this. And so much the more are these Doctrines to be then inculcated, because Children in the earliest part of their Life are guided only by Sense; and that Inclination to Corporal Pleasures, which is the great Temptation to this Vice, is then most prevalent in them.

Wherefore it is requisite they should be fortified against it by good Instruction in their tender Years, whereby to lay a Foundation for Religion and Virtue, and beget in them a mighty Veneration for Almighty God; and after this by a Care to see them well brought up, in great Temperance, a Plainness of Apparel, an Unacquaintedness with bodily Pleasures, in Modesty, and an Abhorrence, not only of whatever is apparently destructive of Chastity, but whatever has the least Tendency towards Impurity. They should be taught a great Reservedness and Caution in their Discourse, and not be suffer'd to read obscene Books, or to talk wantonly, or any way that in the least offends against Modesty, and should never have anything of this nature said in their Hearing. For the bare Hearing and Repeating this sort of Language im-

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pairs their Modesty, and gradually wears it away, and this being once lost, they no longer have any Guard upon themselves.

Children and young People should likewise be put upon labour, and accustom'd to take pains to bear with Weariness and other Inconveniences, to abstain from Delights, and mortify themselves, and follow those Directions which Reason and Religion prescribe for the Government of their Passions. It is not to be thought what account these Means will turn to, what great Influence the Doctrines of the Gospel will have upon Children thus educated; and how much less susceptible they will be of any inordinate Passions; how they will find the Disposition of their Souls confirm'd and establish'd, so as to contribute very highly to the Happiness of their Life, and the Practice of Virtue.

But this is not now the Method of educating Children. It is seldom that Care is taken to instil the Principles of Religion into them, and in particular to train them up to Purity. Most Families are very regardless of their Children as to this part of their Duty, and more especially at those Years, when these Advertisements are most needful for them. No Instructions are then given them for guarding them against Uncleaness; little regard is then had to their Conduct, but they are commonly left wholly to themselves.

And yet what is much worse than this. They are wont to be bred in such a manner, as naturally inclines them to Sensuality and Lust; so negligent are most Parents of their Children's Education, and so little regard have they to see them accustom'd to the ways of Virtue. The Peasants, Artificers, Servants of both Sexes, and others of inferior Rank, have for the most part very weak and confus'd Apprehensions of Piety and Religion,

gion, having been carelessly brought up, with no Sense of any thing but what concerns the Body. And those of better Condition are not much better taught; so that oftentimes their Estates and Advantages as to this Life serve only to make them the more vicious and sensual. They are taught to live effeminately, and to mind only the things of this World. They are ruin'd while young by Luxury and Gluttony, by minding their Dress too much, and feeding too high. And if any would be very obliging and kind to them, they have got an ill Custom of doing it, by presenting them with some sort of Ornaments, or by inviting them to eat such Meats as are not fit for them. By what they both hear and see they are made to imagine that it is Desirable and Advantageous to wear fine Cloaths, and eat what is most pleasing to their Taste. This is what they are very ready to harken to, and what they are easily induced to comply with. And hence it unavoidably comes to pass, that their Constitution is depraved, and they soon become Lovers of Pleasures. It is infinitely dangerous therefore to encourage the Sensuality of young Persons by ill Habits, of Delicacy, and Daintiness in the Choice of Meats, or of Excess in Eating; this being the ready way to have them swallow down a deadly Poyson in their tender Years, and render them sensual and intemperate all their Life after. But nothing is more pernicious than drinking Wine, which some even of the Pagans have thought unfit for those who are under twenty Years of Age to drink. Yet now it is usual in many Countries for Children and even for Girls to drink it unmixed. These are visible and necessary Causes of Impurity, and are therefore very unreasonable and improper. For young Persons are sufficiently inclin'd to Pleasures by the Heat of their Youth, and the Plenty
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and Briskness of their Spirits ; so that there is no need of cherishing and promoting such their Inclination, or of farther inflaming their Passions by a sensual Education.

Hereto may be added the Example which Children have set them, and the Discourse they hear in the Families whereof they are a Part, the Management of most Parents being a matter of great Lamentation. Great Care should be taken, and great Circumspection used, in what is said before Children ; because they are observant, and very apt to take notice, especially of what comes from their Fathers and their Mothers. Wherefore nothing should be said where they are by, that has the least Tincture of Impurity. And yet how many Fathers and Mothers have no regard to it ; though they thereby discover themselves very defective as to Chastity and Piety ? They say any thing before their Children, tell immodest Stories, and use obscene and indecent Expressions, and possibly such as are remarkably so. Now such would do very well to consider whether any thing can more readily poison the Minds of Children than such Carriage. It was *Plato's* Saying, as is related by *Plutarch*, That Aged Persons should study above all things to shew their Modesty in the Presence of the Younger sort ; and that whenever they leave off to behave themselves accordingly, it is impossible to instill Shame and Reverence into their Children.

To conclude, There are two Faults to be observ'd, which are committed in the Education of Children, which tend very much to the Corruption of their Morals, and render them less pure and virtuous. The former of which is committed when they are Little, and the other when they are come to some Bigness. Whilst they are little, they have little Communication with Wisemen ;
and

and their Parents not willing to have the Patience to talk with them, nor to leave their Affairs or their Pleasures for them, put them into the hands of Maids or other Servants, from whom they can learn no Good, and by whom they are early corrupted, namely by Seeing and Hearing divers matters which are contrary to Virtue, and which teach them to know Vice, and to love it.

The other Fault I would mention is, That they are dismiss'd too young out of their Fathers House, and are left to their own Government, whilst they are not yet of Age to order themselves, but yet are susceptible of all sorts of ill Impressions. From Sixteen to Nineteen or Twenty, is the most dangerous part of all our whole Lives, that being the time when Youth enters into the World, and their Passions grow unruly, and there is a great deal of hazard in beginning to tast of Pleasures. By no means therefore should they be left to themselves at this Age; and if for Reasons taken from the manner of their Education they must be put out, all possible Care must be taken to commit them to the Inspection of Wisemen, who may watch narrowly over the Conduct of themselves, and not let them go out of their Houses, without having got them first well grounded in Religion. This is the great Duty of Fathers, and the greatest Good they can do to their Children. This is of a very different Consequence, from the other Cares that People are wont to take. And it is the most certain Method Parents can pitch upon, to promote their Children's Happiness in this World, and to save themselves a great deal of Expence, and a great deal of Uneasiness. The Neglect of which in Fathers, is the reason their Children thrive no better; but above all it is one of the Causes why they abandon themselves to Impurity.

C H A P. III.

*The Third Cause of Uncleanness,
The Way of Living.*

A Third Cause of this Vice is a heedless inconsiderate manner of Life, which must be rectified in many Particulars, before People will be able to perform their Duty aright, in this as well as other respects.

I. And in the first place Devotion is absolutely necessary in order to a virtuous Conversation, and in an especial manner, in order to Chastity. Humble and fervent Prayer is the Method Almighty God himself has prescribed for obtaining Grace and the Holy Spirit of God. And those pure and solid Pleasures with which Devotion fills the Soul, are an admirable Defence against the most powerful Temptations of Voluptuousness. But then it is only a small part of Mankind that have attained to a true Sense of Devotion, that are both constant and hearty in their Addresses to God, and do not neglect these as well as Reading, Meditation, Religious Discourse, and other Instances of Piety; or that take any Delight in them. And what then can be expected, but that being no better guarded against the Temptations of the Flesh, they should be overpowered and captivated by them?

II. Idleness is a frequent Occasion of People's falling into this Sin of Uncleanness. Business chases away evil Thoughts, by employing the Mind to better purpose, and by mortifying the Body, and consequently the Passions. But whilst any lead a careless unactive Life, they are necessarily

ſarily expoſed to Luſt, unleſs their natural Temper and Conſtitution happily prevent it. And when the Lazy, and thoſe that live without any Employment meet with theſe Temptations, they readily yield to them, their Idleneſs having before weaken'd them, and render'd them unfit to encounter any Attempts that are made upon them. Having never been accuſtom'd to overcome their own Appetites, or to offer Violence to themſelves in whatever Caſe, the leaſt Oppoſition they meet with proves too hard for them. This therefore is one Cauſe why the younger ſort are ſo eaſily led aſide by their Paſſions; they are not enough engaged in Buſineſs. And for this Reaſon it is that in thoſe Places where Perſons are not intent upon any kind of Work, and have nothing to do for Part of the Year, the Crimes of Uncleanneſs reign much more than where the People are held to continual Labour.

† Eph. 5.
18.
Acoria.

III. Intemperance alſo leads to Uncleanneſs, theſe being two Vices that ordinarily go together, and promote each other; as the Holy Scriptures inform us. The Apoſtle St. Paul notes † *that Wine leads to * Diſſoluteneſs and Exceſs*. And throughout the New Teſtament Drunkenneſs and Gluttony are almoſt always joined with Impurity; as I have obſerved before. Intemperance naturally begets Laſciviouſneſs, in that on the one hand it depraves the Conſtitution, and enflames the Blood and Spirits, and on the other, it takes away the free Uſe of Reaſon, or at leaſt it leaves Perſons no longer upon their Guard, makes them leſs modeſt, and gives them a certain Freedom and Boldneſs in both their Speech and their Behaviour, whence they eaſily and in a very little time proceed to a farther Liberty. So that whereas in a Wiſeman, and much more in a Chriſtian, the Body ſhould be in ſubjection to the Spirit, and Reaſon ſup-
ported

ported by Religion should govern and suppress the Motions of the Flesh ; Intemperance subjects the Soul to the Body, and enfeebles Reason and Religion ; and so subverts the natural Order of things, and plunges inevitably into Impurity. The Soul by this means becoming gross and sensual, is render'd unfit for Watching and Prayer, and rasting any other Pleasures, than those of the Body, whose Slave it is.

What I here speak of Intemperance concerns not those only who have arrived at the more scandalous and shameful Excesses of Debauchery, who eat immoderately, and drink till they have perfectly lost their Understanding ; but those likewise who without exceeding in the Quantity of what they either eat or drink, seek after Delicacies, and the choicest and most dainty Food ; and in general, all that are not sober and plain in their Diet, but set themselves to please their Appetite. There is no being chaste without living soberly, and accustoming ourselves to deny the Body its Demands, and especially as to Diet. When we have learn'd to govern ourselves in eating and drinking, we shall quickly become Masters of the Body and its Desires. And so we see the Gospel prescribes Sobriety and Fasting as one of the principal Means of subduing the Body, and taming the Passions. But when we neglect such Means we evidently run the hazard of sinking under the Temptations of Impurity ; and this Danger is continual, in regard that Food is of inevitable Necessity for the Body, and what it every day calls for. When any therefore instead of practising Abstinence, study rather to satisfy their fleshly Appetite, their Soul then falls an easy Prey to Temptations.

IV. Too much Care of the Body, and the Love of Pleasures, is also another Step towards Lust.

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One of the chief Doctrines of the Christian Religion is not to be too favourable to the Body, And it is very certain that a Love of Pleasures, is a Disposition diametrically opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel, which is a Spirit of Mortification, and Self-denial. *Make not Provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof*, was St. Paul's Advice †. Our Blessed Saviour denounced * a dreadful Woe against them that live in Pleasures upon the Earth, and think of nothing but Joy and Mirth. And his ‖ Apostle St. James ‖ speaks to the same Purpose. He that is enslaved to his Senses and Body, and whose Mind is set upon Pleasures, treads very slipperily. This Inclination grows every Day more violent accordingly as it is attended to, till at length the Man has so habituated himself to it that he knows not how to get rid of it.

† Rom. 13.

* St. Luke

6. 24, 25.

‖ St. Ja. 5.

5.

Yet how dangerous soever this manner of Life be, it is nevertheless what too many love and are fond of; who instead of mortifying their Bodies, by denying them what they call for, yield it all most readily, and make it their constant study, and the main Aim and Design of their Endeavours, to comply with and gratify their Desires. It is a Maxim own'd by many, not to cross themselves in any thing, but on the contrary to seek after all the Delights and Enjoyments of Life, in Eating, and Drinking, in Lodging, in Cloaths, and every thing else. There are abundance of People, especially amongst those whose Quality and Estates distinguish them from their Neighbours, and oftentimes also amongst those of inferior Rank, who never think of any greater Happiness than to waste their Time in doing nothing, to be merry, and continually in Company, or at Play, or some other Diversion. And in truth they know not how else to pass their Time. They divide it therefore betwixt their Sleep, their Dressing and

Adorning

Adorning themselves, their Meals and other Entertainments, their Visits, Amusements and Pleasures; some or all of which engross it wholly. And this effeminate sort of Life, which daily obtains more and more, destroys Chastity, besides a vast number of other Evils, which it is the Cause of. And if they that indulge themselves in it do not fall into the Excesses of Uncleanliness, it must be either because they have no natural Inclination this way, or because some worldly Considerations withhold them from it, it being hardly possible that the Hearts of such should not be taken up with the inordinate Lusts of the Flesh. Delights corrupt, enervate, and weaken the Soul, and render the Man tender, and unable to resist the Allurements of Voluptuousness. The same I say of Dan- cings, Balls, Vain Shews, and all that may be cal- led the Pomp of the World.

Let us now imagine a Man, such as we see a- bundance are, whose Temper disposing him to Sensuality, stands in need to be corrected by Ab- stinence and Mortification; let us imagine this Man, I say, to take all the ways he can to in- flame and heighten his Lust, that he feeds high, declines all Labour, and loves his Pleasures, and is so far from shunning what gratifies the Senses, that it is his business to find it out; and who in- stead of Abstinence and Mortification is for Good Cheer, instead of Work for Idleness, instead of Watching for Sleep and Rest, instead of due Austeri- ties for Luxury, instead of a simple plain way of Li- ving for Pride and Delicacies; now I say it is as im- possible for this Man to be chaste, as for a Fire not to kindle by blowing, and a constant Addition of Fuel, Wood, or whatsoever combustible matter. God must work Miracles, or rather must destroy the Nature of Man, if he will have such an one, whilst he remains in this Estate, not to be addicted

to Impurity. Sensuality and the Love of Pleasures have ever been the Ruine of Virtue, and particularly of Chastity. And it is always to be observed, that in those Places where such a soft, easy, and slothful Course of Life prevails, all both Men and Women lose the Sentiments that properly belong to their Sex. The Men become effeminate; and the Women by little and little part with their Modesty, and Bashfulness, till they grow shameless and venture upon the same Extravagances, and the same Debaucheries as the Men. And this makes way for such Enormities as I may not undertake to describe.

It has been observed in all Ages how dangerous the Love of Pleasures has proved, and it is at this time remarkable that where People live in Rioting, and Idleness, and Luxury, as is usual in the Courts of most Princes, and in those Countries where the Delights of Life abound, those that dwell in these Places are almost all vicious and addicted to Luxury. The holy Scripture † *Gen. 13.* propounds to us in this Case the Example of *Sodom*. The Country in which this City lay, was according to *Moses's* Relation, and that of || *Josephus*, one continual Garden, wherein grew great Plenty of Plants and the most delicious Fruits. The Advantages and Delicacies of this Country corrupted the Inhabitants; their Plenty produced amongst them Idleness and Wantonness; their Affluence of good things made them voluptuous and effeminate, and push'd them on to the most terrible Extravagances.

* *Ezek. 16.* The Sin of *Sodom*, says *Ezekiel* *, was *Pride, Fulness of Bread, and abundance of Idleness*. And this Corruption grew at length to such a height, that God resolving not to bear any longer with this abominable People, executed upon them the dreadfulest

|| *Of the War of the Jews*, l. 4. c. 27.

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Vengeance that has ever been heard of. A terrible Evidence to what intolerable Abominations a Man may become obnoxious, when a Love of Pleasures and Sensuality have got the Possession of him. These Passions are never to be satisfied, but grow more and more powerful by all the ways that are taken to please them, and never stop short of the last Excesses whensoever the Reins are let loose to them. They are as a Torrent swelling every Day higher and higher, till it carry all away with it. Thus the Heart grows soft and tender, Modesty and Chastity retire, and partly by Inclination, and partly out of Vanity and Point of Honour, People are drawn in to do as others do; and nothing less than some severe Calamity can stop the Course of these Impieties, and make Persons bethink themselves, and return to a better Mind.

V. Amongst other Causes of Impurity Excess in Apparel must by no means be omitted. This sort of Luxury is not only culpable as expressly forbidden in the Gospel, but upon several other Accounts which I may not insist upon here. Wherefore not to treat of it otherwise than as it relates to Impurity, I say Persons may offend in their Dress, either against Plainness, or against Modesty; and both the one and the other of these Offences leads to Impurity.

1. A Love of Finery and Gaiety is a frequent Companion of this shameful Passion. *Salomon* represents the whorish Woman, as one † that is † *Prov. 7.* adorn'd, deck'd, and perfum'd. Unchast Persons ^{16, 17.} study to please; and those that employ their time in Dressing themselves to the best advantage, love to be looked upon when thus set forth; which may easily tend to beget impure Desires, whether in themselves, or those who behold them. Their Vanity this way makes them love to shew themselves,

selves, and gives them free, open, and confident
Airs, and thereby takes off from their Bashfulness
and Modesty, which naturally inclines to a more
reserved manner of Life, and a more prudent,
stay'd, and graver Deportment. The third Chap-
ter of *Isaiab* well deserves to be often read, as ex-
cellently suiting with this Argument. The Pro-
phet there passes a long and severe Censure upon
the Luxury and Pride of the Daughters of *Jerusa-
lem*; but besides this he taxes them with want of
Modesty and Shamefacedness; that they were
*haughty, lifted up their Heads, and walked with
stretched-forth Necks*, shewing apparent Tokens of
their Immodesty by their Looks, their Gait, and
their whole Carriage. Whence it is to be ob-
serv'd, that as a Love of fine Cloaths and other
Ornaments prevails very much amongst the Fe-
male Sex, so is it apt to carry many of them very
far; and there are too many of them, who will
not stick wretchedly to expose themselves, even
to the last degree, for the satisfying this Passion.

2. But this Vanity becomes more culpable and
more dangerous, when it prevails to the prejudice
of Modesty. One of the first Lessons we find in
Scripture, was given in relation to Modesty and
the Use of Apparel. *Moses* † teaches that Gar-
ments were given to Man after his Fall for a Co-
vering; and accordingly Modesty and Decency
require the Body to be cloathed. Which Rules
are to be inviolably observed amongst Christians,
seeing we make Profession of singular Purity;
though they chiefly relate to the Female Sex. The
Apostles most expressly admonish Women of this
Duty; that * they adorn themselves in modest Ap-
parel, with Shamefacedness and Sobriety. St. Peter al-
so speaks to the same purpose, 1 Ep. 3. 23. Of
which latter place it is to be noted, that this Apo-
stle having recommended it to the Christian Wo-
men,

† Gen. 3.

* 1 Tim.
2. 9.

men, to have their Conversation pure and chaste, he immediately hereupon forbids Luxury, after this manner testifying plainly that this and vain Ornaments agree not with Chastity. *Let the Women, says he, be in subjection to their own Husbands; that if any obey not the Word, they may without the Word be won by the Conversation of the Wives. While they behold your chaste Conversation coupled with Fear. Whose Adorning let it not be the outward adorning, of plaiting the Hair, or of wearing Gold, or putting on of Apparel.* Wherefore there is no doubt to be made, but Modesty ought to be most exactly preserved in the manner of Cloathing; and even to a Nicety. In other Cases some Liberty is allow'd; and a Christian may follow the Mode where he lives, and accustom himself to the Fashion and Usage, in what concerns his Habit, so he does not fall into Excess, nor lay out upon it too much Pains, too much Time, or too much Charge; and that he shuns Haughtiness and Pride, and all Occasion of Scandal. But with respect to Modesty and Chastity, People should be most nicely circumspect, and never follow any Fashion; or any way of Dressing, that is hurtful to Purity, in howsoever low a degree it be. This is an Article that requires great Exactness, especially amongst Women, whose Sex obliges them in a more particular manner to behave themselves modestly.

Here then we may see a very sensible Proof, of the Remisness of Christians. In many places no regard is had to Decency in the manner of Cloathing, and Women are not dressed as Modesty and Chastity demand; they adorn themselves after a free, indecent, and dissolute manner, and appear publickly in a Dress favouring of Unchastity. Thus Modesty is almost quite lost, in this respect, and the Fashion is become so customary, that People have no Scruple about it. This Immodesty,

deſty, theſe Nakedneſſes, and this want of Shame-facedneſs, were accounted very infamous amongſt the Primitive Chriſtians. *Tertullian* deſcribing the barbarous and diſſolute Manners of the Borderers upon the *Euxine* Sea, tells among other things, that the † *Women of theſe Countries had no regard to Modeſty, and that they would appear with their Boſoms all uncovered.* Which this ancient Father noted as the Sign of an egregious Depravation; which yet is at this day too common amongſt Chriſtians. There is no need to prove that this want of Modeſty in Apparel is a great Cause of Impurity, and the Source of numerous Temptations, and ſinful Deſires; that it will not fail to extinguiſh Baſhfulneſs, and introduce Licentiouſneſs and Luſt, and I know not how many other dreadful Evils.

VI. Another Cause of this Vice is too frequent and too familiar Converſation of Perſons of both Sexes, and eſpecially whilſt they are young. And not to mention here a frequency of Meetings with ſuch as are known to be vicious and debauch'd; though it be certain the Company, the Diſcourſe, and the Examples of ſuch do very much corrupt Youth; not to mention this, I ſay that even too familiar a Converſation between Men and Women is the Cause and Occaſion of many Tranſgreſſions; and that nothing more naturally tends to the Corruption of Youth. This breeds in their Hearts diſorderly Paſſions and Deſires, and ſo involves many in the Crime and the many Evils that follow upon it. Wiſemen have always thought that young People, and chiefly Girls, ſhould be brought up in private, and that it is dangerous and miſbecoming to allow them too much Liberty. Amongſt the *Jews*, their Girls

† *Tert. adv. Marc. l. 1.*

went little abroad, and when they did, went veiled as well as the Women. And we see the Apostle approved this Usage of theirs, in that he ordered the Women to appear veiled in the holy Assemblies, and with Tokens of Humility and Modesty; as was inviolably practiced in the Primitive Church. However these Injunctions are little observed in our Days, but rather the quite contrary; too much Liberty is given the younger sort, who are allowed to live freely, openly, and unre-servedly. And so by degrees they lose their Modesty, Bashfulness, and Caution, their main Preservation against Impurity.

And here I cannot forbear touching upon one shameful and crying Enormity, very common in many Places; that is the promiscuous and scandalous accompanying of Boys and Girls together with each other, whereby they are seen, even in the Night, in a manner not only indecent, but very faulty. And which is very strange to think, this is done in the Sight and with the Knowledge of their Fathers and Mothers, who in their own Houses, and amongst their own Children suffer such infamous Familiarities, as ought by no means to be admitted of in any Nation professing Christianity. It is with great Reluctancy, that I commit these things to Writing, nor should I have done it but that the Disorders of this kind which reign in divers places compel me to it.

VII. It must be own'd likewise that War is to abundance of People a woeful School of Impurity. No doubt there are some that live chastly in this Employment, but for the Generality, every one knows that Souldiers give themselves a great Liberty in regard to Pollution, and that many of them are not ashamed to proclaim it. Nor ought this to surprize any who consider that Men of this Profession are ordinarily driven to it, either by
I 4 their

their Licentiousness, or a Prospect of Gain or Preferment, or through Misery and Poverty, out of which they are not willing to extricate themselves by honest Labour. Now this being the Case of most of the Souldiery, that they have wanted the Happiness of a good Education and Instruction, and have ventured upon a Course of Life, where they meet with continual and very strong Temptations, particularly Idleness and bad Examples, and where the Helps to Piety are very rare, and they think they have a Dispensation to live as they please; Can it possibly be expected that in these unhappy Circumstances their Manners should not be very corrupt, and especially as to Incontinence? And which is worse yet, being thus corrupted abroad, at their return home, they bring their Vices back with them, and so both abandon themselves, and invite others to all sort of Licentiousness.

VIII. Almighty God has appointed Means, and especially Marriage, for preserving from the Defilement of Impurity. But many refuse to enter upon this State, or at least neither enter upon it, nor live in it as they ought. The Injunction of Celibacy has done abundance of Mischief, and has introduced infinite Crimes and Abominations into the World and the Church. But many besides, no way concern'd in this, forbear Marriage; some through Libertinism, and to be less confined in their Passions, or to avoid some Inconveniences they apprehend to accompany the Married Life; and others, because they cannot meet with a Fortune to their mind, or helpful Relations, or other Advantages they aim at. And in the mean time not being chaste, they hereby expose themselves to continual Temptations, and cannot avoid being ever and anon overcome by them. They that are married likewise oftentimes
bring

bring themselves into the same Difficulties, either by not living in that Purity wherein they ought to live, or because they married only out of Interest, or Ambition, and not by Inclination and mutual Affection. Now such Marriages cannot be expected to prove happy; and in truth the Effects of them are often very dreadful. Want of Kindness and Esteem is sometimes the Cause of breaking out into Adultery, as well as an ungovernable Temper, and a Failure in point of Easiness and Compliance in the Married Persons.

CHAP. IV.

The Fourth Cause of Uncleanness, Ill Books.

THE Fourth Cause of Impurity I shall instance in, is unchast Books. I have formerly shewn in † my *Treatise Of the Causes of Corruption*, how many sorts of Books tend to corrupt the Readers Manners; but this must not totally prevent my touching upon the same Head in this place; the Mischief that is done by this means among Christians being greater than can be sufficiently lamented.

It has been long complained of that young Men who have learned the Tongues, have been corrupted by reading and interpreting the Poets and other Heathen Authors, where they have met with divers foul and immodest Expressions, fitted to excite their Curiosity and their Passions. And yet were there no Books of this nature except in the learned Languages, and which therefore are

† *Part II. Cause VII.*

not generally understood, the Case were not near so bad. But alas ! how many are there to be seen in the modern Languages, that are of no less pernicious Consequence ? It is oftentimes not so very easy to put even Books of Religion into the Hands of Children, where we can be sure they shall meet with nothing that may any way do them hurt. Such extravagant Liberty is allowed in some places, that Authors make no difficulty of publishing whatever they please against Religion and good Manners. Neither do the Spiritual Governors, though perhaps strict enough in Matters of far less Importance, nor the Civil Magistrate, set themselves with any concern to suppress these dangerous Writings ; but they have free Permission, are bought and sold publicly, and possibly *With Licence*.

There have been from time to time, and are now in our own Days, certain mischievous Books, full of Libertinism, Obscenity, Nastiness, shameful and scandalous Stories, against the very Principles of Religion ; which betray such a Stock of Licentiousness and Impiety as is not easily to be conceived. But what is more surprizing and more scandalous is, that these Works find Patrons not only amongst profess'd Libertins, but even amongst those whose proper Business should be to undertake the Defence of Religion against these and all its Adversaries. These Books have done infinite Mischief ; have made a great number of Libertines and Atheists, and taught People in general, and even such as had never studied their Religion, to dispute against it, to call it all into Question, and sophistically to cavil at it, not excepting the Fundamental Articles of our Faith, and the Histories of the holy Scripture. But it is impossible to tell what Mischief they have done, and do every day in respect to Impurity. Here therefore is
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one considerable Cause of this Vice ; which is also at the same time a sensible Proof of the excessive Licentiousness that reigns amongst Christians. We have already taken notice that it is more offensive to speak unchastly, than only to think so ; but yet it is much worse to write than to speak in this manner. And the Reason is plain, in that what is said hurts only the Hearers, and is presently over, but what is committed to writing is more lasting, and is dispersed all abroad. This is exposed to the view of all, and so unchast Books become for a long time together, and to Multitudes of Persons, a Cause of publick Impurity.

As Books of this Character are not fit to be read by any, so those who have any Sense of Religion will not know how to allow themselves to read them. I know some will plead, that a Man should read all sorts of Books, that he may improve his Understanding by the Diversity of Subjects that will occur in them. But there are other Books besides those which are instructive ; and it is much better not to know several things which some Authors have laboured to amass together, which yet serve little to any other purpose than to endanger and pollute the Heart. And moreover besides this Danger of being defiled and corrupted, there is another Reason for not reading these Books, namely, lest they should leave such Impressions on the Mind, and such Ideas in the Memory, as will not readily be banished thence, and yet which, if they do not seduce the Heart, cause a great deal of Uneasiness and Trouble to the Soul. It is no strange thing to hear People bewail the Misfortune they had in conversing with improper Authors in their Youth, and getting Love-Poems by heart, which long after recur to their Thoughts, and many times very unseasonably, and upon the most serious Occasions. Some have found no
small

small Trouble and Disquiet from them when lying upon their Death-beds. So that there is abundant Reason to abstain from Books of this nature, which may prove very hurtful, but can do no good.

But above all it is a matter of the highest Consequence to prevent young Persons employing themselves in this manner, and take from them not only all impure and unchast Books, but all wherein is any thing that tends to Impurity, all Books of Love and Gallantry, which most certainly serve to no other Use than to seduce the Mind and Heart. I might have added other Reflections upon this Subject; but I am not willing to repeat what I have already said in a former Discourse*.

CHAP. V.

The Fifth Cause. Impunity, and Want of good Government.

THE Last Cause of this Vice is Impunity, and Want of a due Execution of Government both Civil and Ecclesiastical.

I. In the Civil Society, Princes, Magistrates, and Judges should consider that this Sin is, as I have proved, contrary to the Publick Welfare, and should therefore make it their study, to put a stop to so great a Nuisance. But where is this Care taken? Where doth the Government inflict any Punishments upon the Impure? Or if any be inflicted, are they not so light, as that few are afraid of exposing themselves to them for the Sa-

* *Treatise of the Causes of Corruption. Part II. Cause VII.*

tisfaction of their Passions? There are in *Christianity* two grievous Faults, with relation to the Society, as well as to the Laws of the Gospel; the One in respect to Adultery, the Other to Divorces.

1. In respect to Adultery, it must be acknowledged to the Shame of almost all Christian Princes and Magistrates, that this Crime is not punished as it ought to be; either sufficient Provision is not made against it by good and wholesome Laws; or else those Laws are not duly put in execution. Even the Pagans surpassed us Christians herein; for they put Adulterers to death, as I have shewn; whereas in most Christian States they are very gently prosecuted. I will not enter in this place upon that Question, which some make, whether Death ought to be the Punishment of Adultery; but shall only propose another Question; which is, Whence it comes to pass that Christian Rulers have taken upon them to enhance the Punishment of Thieves, and at the same time to lessen that of Adulterers? † God's Law adjudged Adulterers to Death, no less than Murderers, but did not pass so severe a Sentence upon Robbers. And yet Offenders in this kind lose their Life for it; many times stealing what is of no great Importance is attended with Death; now some make a great question whether this be just; whether capital Punishments for Theft be warrantable, and if this

† Our Author's Argumentation in this place being founded upon a political Law of the Jews, seems to favour the Doctrine of Carolostadius and Castellio, who asserted the Validity of the Judicial Laws of that People. (Wilhel. Zepper. l. i. c. 2.) Whereas it is to be considered, that as we are not now under the Theocracy as the Jews were, so we cannot be obliged by their capital Laws, but all Governors are at liberty to make, and their Subjects to obey such other Constitutions as seem most to conduce to the Good of the People where they are established.

Crime were not better proceeded against in another manner, more conformable to the Divine Law, and the Spirit of the Gospel, and more conducing to the Publick Welfare. But without taking upon me to decide this Question, I only ask by what Right the Proceedings against Robbers are so rigorous, whilst Adulterers are suffered to live, though guilty of a much greater Injury, and which by the Law of God was to be punished with Death? However if Magistrates think they have good Reason not to proceed to capital Punishment of Adulterers, they ought certainly to use all the Severity towards them that is consistent with the Preservation of their Lives. Which would be a ready way to prevent the commonness of this Crime. But on the contrary they are wont to be used with very great Indulgence, and such Remissness as considerably lessens the Horror that every one ought to have of so flagitious a Crime as this is.

† St. Mat.
5 & 19.

2. The other Fault respects Divorces. In relation to which the Law of our Blessed Saviour † is so express, as might well caution all Judges never to grant Divorces, but in conformity to its Direction. Yet in many Countries they admit of them upon very slight grounds; separating Husbands and Wives upon other accounts besides the Crime of Adultery. And what is yet a greater Abuse, they have upon too easy Terms granted to the Persons thus parted a Liberty of remarrying. It is obvious to observe the terrible Effects of these pernicious Customs. The Hope of finding a way to get rid of a Companion not beloved, or of marrying another, may tempt, and actually does tempt many Persons to the Sins of Uncleanness, and sometimes to other grievous Crimes.

It needs not be added in this place, that this Law touching Divorce, is very difficult to be observed.

serv'd. *Tertullian* relates * that six hundred Years * A--
had pass'd without the knowledge of any one Divorce in the Families of the antient *Romans*, and that they came not into common Use, till their Manners began to be very corrupt. If the Heathens had this regard for Marriage, how can Christians, who have abundantly greater Light vouchsafed them, think the Law of Christ too hard, and too burdensom?

I shall mention one thing more in this place, which is the Occasion of manifold Miscarriages, and that is the Convenience young People find in many places of being privately married, and in strange Churches, without the Knowledge of their Relations. This Abuse ought to be reformed, and no Marriage should be celebrated except publickly, according to the Order and Rites established, and in the Churches to which they belong. I must say farther before I leave this Article of Marriage, that to oblige People to reverence it and live chastly, the Ecclesiastical Discipline ought to be exercised upon such who marry only the better to conceal their Lewdness, and that when their vicious manner of Conversation comes to be discovered, they should not escape the Church's Censures, as they too often do in many Places.

II. In the Church the Neglect of Discipline, which is one of the grand Causes of Corruption, is more particularly one of the principal Sources of Impurity. The Apostles who have appointed and so earnestly recommended the Exercise of Discipline, have more especially appointed it for the Impure; as is declared 1 *Cor. v.*; where this Matter is particularly treated of. There *St. Paul* delivers it as an inviolable Law, that those who indulge themselves in this Sin are not to be suffer'd in the Church, but to be cut off, and not to be looked upon as Christians, till they shall have given

ven good evidence of their Repentance. And seeing there was amongst the *Corinthians* a Man guilty of horrible Impurity, he complains that such a Crime had been committed amongst them, but he complains more of the Church than of the Criminal; he censures the *Corinthians*; he acquaints them how dangerous it was to permit such vile Transgressors amongst them; and tells them the Fault of this Man hereby became the Fault of the whole Church; he does what the Church had neglected to do, makes use of the Power he had as an Apostle of delivering egregious Sinners over to Satan; and then again he repeats the Order he had given the *Corinthians*, not to look upon the Unclean as their Brethren, but to cast them out from among them. I have elsewhere recited the express Words of St. Paul, and have shewn how in the Primitive Church Discipline was strictly exercised upon Adulterers. It would be requisite also to put in practice what the Apostles so often enjoined, namely to avoid Familiar Conversation with such who gave occasion of Scandal by their impure Lives. By which means many might be restrain'd; and besides if any had offended the Church by their Extravagances, their Fault could not then be imputed to the whole Church, nor would the Religion of our Blessed Saviour be dishonour'd by it.

But the Apostolick Discipline is so far from being duly observ'd, that in divers Churches it is totally laid aside. Instead of proceeding against the Impure in excommunicating them for a time, the Ministers of the Church are compelled to admit to the Communion those who are chargeable with infamous Sins, and to give holy things to Dogs and Swine. Heretofore a Bishop or Priest that had receiv'd to the Communion known Adulterers and Fornicators, before they had given publick

Proofs

Proofs of their Repentance, would have been deposed, and the whole Church would have reckoned such an Action as a horrible and unheard of Sacrilege. But now there are Places where he that should deny the Communion to these Men, would be deposed for denying it.

If in some places where there are Laws in being, and Punishments determined for the Unclean, either these Laws impose only civil and corporal Corrections, or else they are some other way defective, or are but badly put in execution: The Crime is often tolerated, and goes without any Punishment at all; and the Actors of it know how to find out Methods of sheltering themselves. And where there is any shew of Discipline it is unduly administered, either by admitting Sinners to the Peace of the Church without having given good Testimony of the Sincerity of their Repentance; or by not making a just difference between their Offences, in that oftentimes the Proceedings against Adultery are no more severe than those against Fornication; or against those that relapse into their Sin, than if they had only once fallen into it. Besides, in those places where this Discipline is in some sort settled, it has not the force that were to be desired, not only upon account of the Defects already mentioned, but likewise because not being exercised every where, Sinners being excluded from Communion in their own Churches, need only go to some other Church to be admitted to the Lord's Table; which is a woful Irregularity, and the ready way to introduce a Contempt of that sacred Ordinance, and of the Censures of the Church, and consequently great Impiety. In the midst of this general Remissness of Discipline, it ought not to be thought strange if People give themselves up to the Sins of the Flesh; since there is nothing encourages Wickedness like Impunity.

These are the Causes of Impurity which I thought my self chiefly concerned to take notice of; and by what has been ſaid concerning them, it is obvious to infer what are the proper Remedies for the Suppreſſion of this Vice. But theſe I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak to in the following part of this Diſcourſe.

SECTION

SECTION IV.

An Answer to the Excuses that are made for Uncleanness.

AFTER what has been said of Uncleanness and the mischievous Effects of it, it is just matter of Astonishment that it should be so common. And it must be either because these forementioned Considerations are not attended to, or because People deceive and flatter themselves with a Persuasion that Uncleanness is no such great Offence, and that they may safely indulge themselves in it. Both of which is too true. The Ignorance and the Negligence of Mankind is very great in this Case; so that either they do not understand their Duty, or do not mind it. But it is certain too that there are false Reasons and insufficient Excuses whereby they make a shift to impose upon themselves. It is ordinary with Sinners to flatter themselves, and try to excuse their Miscarriages, and even to justify them. And as in other cases they do this, so no less in relation to Impurity. For which cause the Apostle *St. Paul* expressly requires that no one deceive himself in this respect, nor suffer himself to be deluded by any vain Appearances of Reason. † *Be not deceived*, says the Apostle; and again * *Let no Man deceive you with vain Words*. † 1 Cor. 6. 10. come therefore now to enquire into and answer * Eph. 5. the principal Excuses whereby Men pretend to palliate this Sin.

I. Some may appeal to the Propensity of Nature, and plead that God Almighty would never have given this to Mankind if they were not allowed to comply with it. But this by no means proves the lawfulness of Incontinence. For it is very certain God has given to Men a natural Inclination to those things which are for the Preservation of Life, and the Propagation of Mankind ; and it is a signal Instance of his Wisdom that he has done it. It was requisite likewise that this Inclination should be strong towards those things, without which Mankind could not continue in Being. This is well worth our serious Consideration, but it is what I must content my self to have but just touched upon. But the Inclination which thus appears in Men, does in no wise authorize the Excesses into which they may fall, and unless we would set Mankind upon the same level with the Beasts, it must be acknowledged that this Inclination is to be kept under Rule and Government. Men have an Inclination to eat and drink ; but can any be so senseless as to infer from hence that they are to observe no Rule or Measure in either of these ? And would this natural Inclination be allowed as a good Excuse for Drunkenness or Gluttony, or the other Excesses of Intemperance ? All that can reasonably be urged against this is, that this Inclination proves that something is permitted to Men. But I hope it does not prove that every thing is lawful for them ; and that they are not oblig'd to a moderate use of whatever God has given them for their Nourishment. And just so it is in the Case before us.

In short, It does not follow that because Mankind are liable to certain Inclinations of their own, therefore these Inclinations can carry them away by an inevitable Force and Fatality, so as that they will be no longer able to resist them. *St. Chrysostom*

Sect. IV. *That are made for Uncleanneſs.*

133

ſoftom very effectually † confutes this Imagination, as extravagant and wicked, in a Diſcourſe againſt the *Manichees*, who charged the Work of God with being evil, and the Nature of Man with carrying him on inevitably to what is evil. He tells them it is Mens Will, not their Nature or their Body, which cauſes the Exceſſes into which they fall, and that the Inclination God has planted in them, was not given them to be abuſed to Wantonneſs and Luſt.

Our own Nature proves this. For if God has endued us with Deſires and Senſations which may tempt to divers Extravagances, he has alſo afforded us Means and Power to reſiſt their Motions. God has beſtowed two Bleſſings upon Mankind, which ſhould be ſure to keep them within their Bounds. The former is Reaſon and Modeſty. The carnal Appetite is brutiſh and blind, and is to be found in the Beaſts alſo ; but Reaſon was given Man to ſubdue this Appetite, and he has it in his choice either to follow this or not, and can judge what he ought to do, and what to refrain from. And accordingly his Reaſon is to direct him as to the Paſſion now under conſideration, as well as in relation to what he eats and drinks. But in regard that Reaſon alone is not of force enough to reſtrain theſe Paſſions, I ſay farther, that God has vouchſafed Man a Supernatural Principle, namely Religion and Faith, which by the Light it gives us, the Motives it lays before us, the Hope of Eternal Happineſs, and the Fear of Hell-Torments, together with the Grace of the Holy Spirit which is hereby communicated to us, enables us effectually to reſiſt our Paſſions. Theſe Power-

† Ad Galat. Ἡ ἐπιθυμία εἰς παιδοποιίαν, καὶ βίαν σύζαον, καὶ πρὸς μοιχείαν, καὶ πορνείαν, καὶ ἀσέλγειαν, &c. Τὸ γὰρ μοιχεύειν ἐστὶ ἐπιθυμία, οὐκ ἐστὶ φουσκῆς, ἀλλὰ ἐστὶ ὑβρεως καὶ ὀργῆς ἑνός.

ful Considerations should raise us above a shameful and brutish Inclination; and with these Assistances we may overcome ourselves, and set ourselves free from the Bondage of our Lusts. If these things were weighed as they ought to be, and all the use that might be were made of these Advantages, an Inclination to Impurity would not be able to govern Men as now it does.

II. And by this time we may see what Answer to return to a second Excuse, taken from the Difficulty of resisting this Passion. I readily agree there are some Pains required for taming the Passions; the Gospel supposes it when it exhorts to deny ourselves, to watch, and fight, and mortify our Desires. But this is no more than is required in the other Parts of our Duty. There is without doubt some trouble in curbing a Fit of Anger, or withstanding the Temptations of Avarice, Pride, and Intemperance. But this is no reason why we should not be oblig'd to conquer these Passions, nor any Proof that we cannot do it. Nor ought any more stress to be laid upon the Difficulty of resisting Impurity

I. Because this Difficulty is not universal, is not to be found in all Persons. Divers overcome their Passions easily and with no great trouble; this being the happy Condition of such who have been bless'd with a pious Education, and whose Youth has been pure. And again, as to those who may have been hurried on with a great deal of force by a vicious Inclination, I have two things to offer. The one, that they are in this Condition is their own Fault; and had they been forewarned against their fleshly Lusts in their younger Years, they wou'd not have been in subjection to them as now they are. The other, It is not yet wholly out of their power to get rid of them. God has furnished them with Remedies against Incontinence, and
Means

Means of avoiding it. So that it is not yet too late to retrieve themselves out of the State they are in, if they will be but at the Pains of heartily endeavouring it. As I shall shew when I come to treat of those who are guilty of this Sin, and the Means of obtaining Chastity.

2. It is really not impossible to live in Purity, and avoid the Excesses of the Flesh ; there being no ground to conclude that this Duty is out of Man's Power. Which if it were, we may assure ourselves Almighty God would not expressly require it of us, and under pain of Damnation. When the Pagans commended Chastity and Continence, they believed it might be preserved ; and can Christians to whom God has granted so many Graces, pretend the Practice of it to be impossible. The Laws of Chastity might indeed have been thought too severe, and not without an appearance of Reason, if we had been left wholly to ourselves and had been made only for this World. But we are Christians, to whom God has granted a new Birth, and whom he invites to a Supernatural State of Happiness. And what can be too hard for the Grace and divine Power of the Gospel, the Example of Jesus Christ, and the Expectation of a Life to come ? Ought not all these Blessings to make us spiritually minded, to inspire us with sublime and noble Thoughts, and to disengage us from the Allurements of our gross and brutish Passions ? God who calls us to Chastity, lets us know on the other hand what is incumbent upon each one of us in order to it ; he prescribes us Means that will considerably facilitate the Practice of this Duty. As will be shewn more particularly hereafter.

3. But I say farther, Wisemen do not suffer themselves to be affrighted with Difficulties, but keep their Thoughts fixed upon the Consequence of their Endeavours, the Benefit or Disadvantage

that may be expected to ensue upon them. And this Consideration should put those who meet with Difficulties in the Duty here treated of, upon encountering it with Courage and Resolution, tho' it had been much greater than it is. On the one side, by doing this they procure to themselves an infinite Happiness, and advance themselves to the most blessed and most glorious State that can be imagined. Besides the Felicity whereof they shall be possessed in Heaven, who had taken care to keep their Bodies undefiled, they take the surest course to be truly happy in this present Life. They may find some trouble in resisting Temptations, but when they have got the Victory, they will never repent of having denied themselves the gratifying of their Senses; and the more Difficulty they have met with in this spiritual Conflict, the greater Comfort and Satisfaction will they enjoy when they are got well through it. Wherefore the Pleasure that arises from having shook off the Yoke of these inordinate Passions of the Flesh, should engage us all to mortify ourselves, and earnestly to strive after this happy State. On the other side, the Mischiefs and Punishments of Impurity call for our Attention, and make it necessary for us to compare Pains with Pains, and Difficulty with Difficulty, the Pains of overcoming our own Desires, and shunning the Gratifications of Sense, with the dreadful Consequents of this Sin, the Wounds it gives the Soul, and the Remorse whereto it subjects it. We should consider the several Misfortunes with which this Vice is attended here in this Life, and which make the guilty Person pay dear for infamous and transient Pleasures. But above all we must bethink ourselves, that if there be trouble in preserving Chastity, and if for this end it were necessary to pull out our Eyes, and cut off our Hands, as our Saviour speaks †, it will

† S. Mar.
9. 43. 47.

will be an incomparably greater trouble to be cast into Hell-Fire, there to undergo the Tortures which Almighty God has prepared for the Unclean. These fleshly Pleasures are but little, and are over in a Moment, but the Pains of the Life to come are terrible, and yet will never have an end.

III. It may be farther urged That every one has not the Gift of Continence, for so some wrest that of *St. Paul*, 1 Cor. 7. 9. But the Apostle answers this in the very same place, declaring that for those who cannot live single, Marriage is ordained as a holy and honourable State, provided they live chastly in it. Again, if this Argument were good, there is no Sin that might not be excused. All Virtues are the Gift of God as well as Continence; his Grace being alike necessary in order to the Government of Mens Anger, and for rendring them sober, Affable, or Charitable, as it is for resisting Uncleannefs. And one that allows himself in Transports of Anger, or lives in Drunkenness and Debauchery, and will neither forgive an Injury or Affront, nor relieve a poor Neighbour, may as well say for himself, that he has not the Gift of Meekness, of Patience, of Sobriety, or of Charity. The Case thus stated, who sees not that this is a vain and frivolous Excuse, and indeed a wicked and impious one? For to say Uncleannefs is no way to be avoided, because God has not bestowed the Gift of avoiding it, is to accuse God himself, and impute to his divine Majesty all the Excesses whereinto any are hurried by this infamous Passion.

Grace is certainly necessary for us, and it is a Gift of God without which we can do no good thing. But then it is as certain that God is ready to vouchsafe us this Gift, on condition we will do our part for obtaining it. And this is to be done † *St. Lu.*
by Prayer, God having engaged † *to give his Holy* 11. 13.
Spirit

Spirit to them that ask him, and by Fasting, Working, and other Methods which I shall touch upon in their proper place ; which Means when made use of as they ought to be, are not so difficult as is ordinarily apprehended. And God does yet more than this ; he freely bestows his Grace, and prevents us by his Spirit, and so puts it into our Power to be Masters of this Gift of Chastity, if it be not through our own Fault. Who are they then that complain for want of this Gift ? Are they not such who will not have it, such who neglect Prayer and all other Means, and will not hearken to all the good Motions which the Holy Spirit excites in them, and the other Advantages that are vouchsafed them ; but rather on the contrary do all they can to deprive themselves of this Gift if they had it, loving Temptations, and wilfully putting themselves in the way of them ? No better can be expected of such, than that they should want this Gift of Chastity. And it is highly unreasonable therefore to insist upon so frivolous an Excuse. If People will not perform their own Duty, yet at least they should not dare to charge God as the Author of all the Wickedness they commit.

IV. Lastly, Those who are guilty of this Vice may seek to shelter themselves under the Examples they find in Scripture of several that have fallen into the Sins of Uncleanness. Which Excuse I have formerly considered * in another Work ; and so it will suffice at present only to alledge, that

I. No Examples can justify the Violation of the Divine Laws, and that the Sins of which we have any Relation in the sacred Volumes, serve only for Admonitions that we be constantly upon our Guard. We must not judge of what is allowed or forbidden by Examples, but by the Law of God,

which is the Rule whereby he will judge us at the Last-Day.

2. We have admirable Patterns of Chastity proposed to us in Scripture, that we may be invited to the imitation of them, as that of *Joseph*, of *Job*, and other holy Men who have been eminent for this Virtue.

3. It is to be considered that these Sins with which some of the Faithful recorded in the Old Testament were overtaken, were grievous Sins, and wherein they must have inevitably perished, if they had not recovered out of them by a sincere Repentance. And if it should be objected as the Consequence of this Assertion, that Sinners may recover of themselves and obtain the Pardon of their Sins, and so the Danger of falling into them is not so great; I answer that God is ready to shew Favour to the Penitent; but that it is the utmost height of Folly, and extremely dangerous to live in Sin upon this Consideration; and it shews an exceedingly depraved Mind to offend and provoke God, only because he is so very good. And he that does so imposes miserably upon himself, in promising himself that he shall be sure to repent; this being what he can have no certainty of. And if any find themselves disposed to take encouragement from the Example of those who have risen again after terrible Falls, let such know they have much more reason to tremble at the Remembrance of others who have fallen in like manner, and have been utterly undone by it.

4. Once more, The Difference that is betwixt the Times of the Gospel and those that were before, may justly silence all these vain Excuses. What our Saviour *Jesus Christ* says *St. Matt. Ch. V. and XIX.* concerning Divorce and Adultery, shews clearly that the Duties of Chastity under the Old Law were very different from what is now required

red of us, and that God, out of regard to the Estate of the *Jews*, and the carnal Temper of their Mind, passed by many Defects by reason of which Christians will be excluded the Kingdom of Heaven. And no one that well understands to what a Degree of Holiness we are called by the Gospel, will ever dare to alledge the Falls of those who lived before Christ, in Excuse of their Impurity.

SECTION

SECTION V.

The Duties of Offenders in this kind.

AFTER having treated thus largely of Uncleaness, before I leave this Subject, it will be requisite to enquire what is incumbent upon such as are chargeable with this Sin, in order to the Pardon of it. This is a most important Article, and concerning which all have great need to be well instructed. And the rather because these Duties are little understood, the greatest part of those who are most concerned in them not knowing what they are to do that they may recover themselves from their Fall. Some will pretend to expiate this Sin by I know not what defective and insincere Repentance, and by this means lead many into Perdition. And hence my Design in this Section is to give some account of what all that are guilty of this Sin are obliged to. And it is what those who have fallen into the Crime are in a peculiar manner concerned to read with great Attention. And those who have not proceeded to the Crime, but are chargeable however with other lesser Species of Impurity, will find several Particulars in what I am about to say, that will relate to themselves. Nor is there any Person whatsoever that may not make some good use of it. The Consideration of what an Unclean Person is to do for obtaining the Pardon of his Offence, is a powerful Motive for persuading to refrain from this Sin. And were every one thoroughly instructed in this Point, People would be far more fearful

ful of yielding to the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, than they usually are.

In general, Every one is convinced that there is no obtaining the Pardon of this Sin, any more than of others, without Repentance. But People are apt to deceive themselves concerning the Nature of Repentance, as not well knowing in what it consists. That I may therefore explain this with some exactness, I say that to repent savingly of this Sin, it is necessary first to be Sorry for it; secondly to Confess it; thirdly to endeavour a Reparation of it; and lastly, to renounce and forsake it.

CH A P. I.

The first Duty of Offenders in this kind, Sorrow for their Sin.

THE First Branch of Repentance, and the First Duty of the Impure is a Sorrow for what they have done. But now that they may not deceive themselves, they ought to be made sensible what is to be the ground of this Sorrow, and what the Degree and Measure of it.

I. It is absolutely necessary to enquire into the Principle whence the Sorrow they feel in themselves proceeds; inasmuch as this Sorrow is not always saving, nor ought it to be believed that all who are afflicted and mourn for the Irregularities of their Lives, are to be accounted true Penitents. The Grief which many feel in themselves, or at least pretend to, is for the most part no better than a worldly Grief. That which sticks so close upon them is very often only a Fretting and Vexation, Shame and Displeasure to find themselves in Dis-
grace;

grace, or exposed to other Temporal Misfortunes, which their Incontinence has brought upon them. One Proof of this is, that the greater part give no Token of their being inwardly afflicted till their Crime comes to be discover'd, and so they come experimentally to find in what Evils they have involved themselves by their ill Conduct. Whilst they can sin secretly, and without fear of Discovery, they continue in their Licentiousness, and take Delight in it. Such a Sorrow is not saving, unless the Sinner make a farther Progress, and improve the Almighty's Chastisements to the begetting in him an unfeigned Abhorrence of his past Transgressions. Wherefore the Principle and Cause of his Grief must be the Greatness of the Sin it self, and the woful Estate whereinto it brings Men in relation to God and their own Salvation. Without repeating here all the Considerations which may justly raise in us an Abhorrence of Impurity, I shall content my self to note, that no Repentance is acceptable in the Sight of God, that does not arise from such Meditations as these. For which reason those who know themselves guilty, should weigh them well with themselves, and have them always present to their Mind. And forasmuch as some are more guilty than others, every one should consider the Nature and Circumstances of the Sins which he has committed, that so his Sense of them and Repentance for them may bear a proportion to the Heinousness of them.

II. As to the Degree and Measure of this Sorrow, two Qualifications are to be attended to, that is, the Greatness of it, and its Duration.

1. It is not enough to be somewhat grieved, and ashamed, but this Grief must be affecting, such as enters deep and pierces the very Heart, filling it with Sadness and Remorse, Detestation and Fear; or if it be not such at the beginning, it must be
such

such at length. This is above all others the one infallible Mark of a hearty Sorrow and sincere Repentance; that the Sinner finds no longer any Pleasure or Satisfaction in the things he had formerly delighted in, but seeks to withdraw and get out of the way of them, and finds more Comfort in his Sadness and Tears for them. Sometimes those that have renounced their Uncleaness, have turned aside another way, and betaken themselves to Pleasures of another nature. But so long as they retain an Affection for worldly Pleasures and Joys of whatsoever kind, this is a certain Sign of their not being touched with a true Repentance.

2. But above all Care must be taken that this Grief be lasting. And this Observation serves not only for the Instruction of the Guilty, but is useful also for the Encouragement of such who do not at the first feel themselves so thoroughly grieved as they ought to be. For Mens Sorrow is oftentimes but light at the beginning of their Conversion; as will easily be apprehended if we but call to mind that there are two sorts of Sins. Some there are for which a Man is apt to have an extreme Concern as soon as ever he has committed them; and they are such as he is not betrayed into by his own Inclinations, nor can take Delight in. Thus when one has committed a Murder, or spoken Blasphemy, he will perhaps be immediately struck with the Horror of his Crime, and a stinging Remorse by reason of it. But it is quite otherwise with those Sins into which Men are drawn by Pleasure, and which gratify their Inclinations, and especially when they are become Habitual. Tho' they take up a Resolution of quitting these, they do not at first look upon them with the Aversion due to them, they could yet please themselves with them, and it is not without doing Violence

to themselves, and resisting their own Inclinations, that they get rid of them. So that their Dislike of these sort of Sins is but small at the first, the Fire of Lust not being yet wholly extinct. But the chief Commendation of it is, that it is Lasting, and encreases continually. And this is what they ought to have an especial Regard to, the Cause of most Mens Failings in these Attempts being, that in time the Sense of their Crime abates, and at last wears quite away.

The Repentance of those who are polluted by Uncleaness, should remain with them to their Lives End. These are not Sins which a Man can forget; and the Memory of them ought to be always fresh, that the Penitent may truly say with *David*, † *My Sin is ever before me*. Not only the † *Ps. 51.3.* Time that has past since the Commission of it, but even an Amendment of Life does not take away the Sense of so great a Fault; but on the contrary he becomes more and more sensible of it. Even this Thought, that the Sinner has had the Happiness to obtain the Pardon of his Guilt, will render the Remembrance of it the more bitter. And the greater Progress he makes in Holiness, the more abominable will his Wickedness appear; the greater Experience he has had of God's Mercy, the more will he accuse and loath himself; and the more Hope he has of Salvation through God's Goodness, the more will he be affected with the Danger of being excluded from it, to which he had exposed himself. In a word, The greater Mercy God has shewn in Pardoning, the more reason has the pardoned Sinner to love God; And the more any one loves God, the more nearly will he be touched with the Thought of having offended Him.

This is the First Duty of such as are chargeable with Impurity, to have a lively, a hearty and piercing

cing Sorrow for it. And if those who find not in themselves such a Sorrow as I have been describing, are not in a State of Salvation, what can we think of those who have no sense at all of their Sin, but instead of condemning, seek to excuse themselves, and are so far from having a pungent Regret, and being in Confusion by reason of their Sin, that they take delight in thinking and speaking of it, and even boast of and glory in it.

CHAPTER II.

The Second Duty, Confession.

THE Second Duty incumbent upon such as are guilty of this Sin, is Confession. I need not say that there is no repenting sincerely of our Sins without confessing them, this is so evident of itself. But then seeing there are two sorts of Confession, the one made to God alone, and the other made to Men, it will be requisite to enquire, What is the Duty of those who are guilty of Impurity, with respect to each of these?

I. Now forasmuch as none doubts of the Necessity of Confessing his Sins to God, I shall not enlarge upon this Article, but shall content myself to mention only these two Observations concerning it. First that this Confession is to be made with an unfeigned Sorrow of Heart, and not with the Mouth only. For considering to whom it is made, that it is to Almighty God, who is the Searcher of Hearts, and thoroughly knows whatsoever passes there, it highly concerns every one to beware of pretending to own his Sins before Him, and to beg his Pardon for them, if the Case be not so, and he is not truly touched with a Sense of them.

them. Secondly, that this Confession is a most effectual Means of raising more and more in us a hearty Compunction, and utter Abhorrence of our Sin; it being impossible for a Sinner who considers himself as in the Presence of God, and calls to his Remembrance the heinous Immoralities he has lived in, and makes a particular Confession of them, who acknowledges in the Presence of the Most Holy God his sinful Actions, together with those impure Thoughts and Motions to which he has suffer'd himself to hearken; it being impossible, I say, for such a Sinner, at such a time, not to conceive an Abhorrence of his Impieties, and that a Confession so made, such a black Catalogue expos'd to the Eyes of the Almighty, shou'd not fill his guilty Soul with Shame, and Confusion, and Indignation against himself.

II. Confession made to Man is either publick or private.

1. Publick Confession is such as is made either before the Church in general, or before those who represent it, according to the different Customs of Places. Now such who have fallen into the Sin of Uncleanness, must Confess their Fault publicly, when it is come to the knowledge of the Church, and they are called upon to tell the Truth. In this Case it ought to be believed, that God having permitted the Fault to be publicly known, it is his Will to have Confession made of it. And accordingly the Offender is to own it ingeniously, and discharge his Conscience of it, whenever he is summoned to do it, by those to whom God has committed the Government of his Church with a Power of Excluding notorious Transgressors. Nor will any one stick at such an Acknowledgment, who is touch'd with a sincere Repentance; but whosoever refuses in these Circumstances to confess his Sins, thereby gives certain Evidence of his Impe-

nitence, and so can hope for no forgiveness. Besides there is an Obligation to confess the truth in order to the removal of that Scandal these sort of Vices give in the Church, for the Comfort and Edification of good People, who cannot but be afflicted by reason of these Vices, and to set an Example to others, this Confession being a most likely means of restraining those who find themselves inclined to Wickedness. So that a Man cannot refuse this Duty without aggravating the Sin he has committed. Besides that in denying what he is justly charged with, he thereby charges his Accuser with having published an Untruth, and made a false Declaration; which is equally inconsistent with Piety, Justice, and Charity. Not to add that Persons by denying their Guilt in this case of Uncleaness, oftentimes engage themselves in another horrible Crime, of refusing to own such Children as they are under an undoubted Obligation to take care of.

Yet how great soever their Crime be, who refuse to confess their Sin, nothing is more common with the Impure, and especially the Men, than to deny the Truth. They betake themselves to Lying and sly Pretences, seeking to defend themselves by all the Tricks they are able to invent. Nor are there wanting some, who though bound by the most tremendous Oath to confess their Fault, deny it upon Oath, and labour to conceal their Wickedness by Perjury, and the most solemn Protestations accompanied with Imprecations against themselves. Which is doubtless one of the most heinous Wickednesses a Man can be guilty of, one of the most dismal Estates a Man can cast himself into. Besides the flagitiousness of the Crime, the Effects of it are terrible; and what is yet more formidable is, that hereby a Door is shut against Repentance. It cannot be denied but a Man
may

may recover himself by confessing what he had denied, but it is what is hardly ever resolved upon. And the longer the time passes on, the greater Impression those false Reasons which are offered to conceal his Fault, will make. A solemn Declaration also being once made, he holds himself engaged in Honour to stand to it, and to do this puts himself upon a necessity of persisting in his Impenitence. Or perhaps he enters upon Marriage, or has a Family of his own, or is in some Employment, or finds himself in other Circumstances, which withhold him from owning afterwards, what he had once endeavoured to conceal.

The Case of such is exceeding dreadful, and all their religious Performances no better than so many Acts of Sacrilege. How can they pray to God, or offer themselves to the holy Communion? And what Uneasiness then, what Frights must they be in, having such a Load upon their Conscience, and especially when they are about to leave this World? Then will these miserable Wretches who have covered their Sin by Lying, Perjury, and other Crimes, and have persevered in so doing to the last, be racked with horrible Remorse. They will then begin to open their Eyes, and to judge of things after another manner than they had done formerly, and will abominate their own blind Madness, and wou'd give all the World, were it at their disposal, that they had made a sincere Acknowledgment of their Sin. It is undoubtedly an excessive degree of Folly and Madness, to choose rather to throw oneself into so frightful a State, and so to be brought within the Bonds and Snare of the Devil, than by a free and impartial Confession to set the Conscience at ease, and enjoy the Happiness and Satisfaction that would follow hereupon. And all therefore who are concerned in what I am saying, should be sure to consider it

well in time, and should take care to Confess their Sin whilst they may ; lest hereafter they be far less willing to do it.

The chief Obstacle to People's Confession of their Faults of this kind, is Shame and the Fear of being Disgraced. But this is a wicked Shame, and a Procedure every way unreasonable. For first they are grossly deceiv'd in thinking that by a Denial of the Truth they shall escape the Shame they are so afraid of. For for the most part it is observable that they are not the less exposed, though they do deny their Guilt, after it has taken Air, and they are required to make a publick Confession of it. They are not thought the less faulty in this case, but on the other hand are had in greater Contempt. But farther it is a Mistake to think Confession of Sin to be just matter of Shame. If the Case were rightly stated, it is rather honourable than shameful to acknowledge the Evil we have done. The Shame is only in doing wickedly ; but it is a laudable Action to Confess the Wickedness we have done, such an Acknowledgment being some sort of Reparation for it. Hereby the Sinner washes off the Stain which Sin has caused in the Soul ; hereby he is restored to Peace with God, he rejoices both the Angels in Heaven and the Church on Earth, and all Wisemen look upon him with an Eye of Love and Compassion.

But supposing a Man were hereby exposed to Shame in this World, and that Men would be sure to pass their Censures upon him, he ought not to be deterred by this. The Fear of another sort of Shame, and another greater Punishment should set him above the Dread of Men. And yet after all, Are the Consequences of a sincere Acknowledgment to be feared even in this World? Though a Man expose himself to the Contempt of Men, and to be reproached and reviled by them, what signi-

signifies this Contempt? The Judgment Men make of us, whether in our Favour or to our Disadvantage, is of very little consideration. Their Approbation or Dislike of us determines nothing, and is quickly forgotten; but the Effects of a Lye persisted in are very dreadful. The Shame which one may suffer in this World is presently over, it vanishes away, and the Men themselves dy; but the Mischiefs whereto Obstinacy in Wickedness renders Sinners obnoxious will never have an End; but they must be exposed in the Sight of God himself, of his Holy Angels, and of Men, to an Ignominy infinitely more formidable than all that is most shameful and most painful here below.

Shame will never prevail over that Man who is heartily grieved for the Sins he has committed. A true Penitent accounts of the Shame as a small matter; and he no longer stands in awe of Men's Judgment, when once he is heartily affected with the Terror of God's Judgments. *David* sinned; but he was not ashamed, though a King, to own his Crime, not only before the Prophet *Nathan*, but in a far more publick Manner, by composing the Fifty-first Psalm upon this Subject, to be to the End of the World a lasting Testimony of his Repentance. A Sinner who is really sensible of his Fault, stands not to hesitate with himself, as to his Behaviour when called to Confess; nor does Shame any way withhold him from it. Being overwhelmed with a much greater Shame, for having defiled himself, offended God, and scandalized the Church; he does not so much attend to his own present Interest, or any worldly Considerations, but that he esteems it his Honour to wash off his Defilement by such an Acknowledgment as may make some Amends for it. And how sensible soever he be of the Shame that follows upon such an Acknowledgment, he willingly submits to it, as a
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good degree of Mortification. He looks upon it as one sort of Punishment, and an Occasion of humbling himself, and subduing his vicious Inclinations, and is very glad of an Opportunity of giving such evidence of his Sincerity and Repentance. A true Repentance fills the Sinner with Indignation, and a Desire of taking all possible Revenge upon himself, and being convinced that he has deserved yet more Shame than he has met with, he readily submits himself to whatsoever is most mortifying to him, and most useful for taming his Flesh and its Passions.

I have treated somewhat largely of this Article, because of the Necessity there is of pressing it, and because it is ordinarily by reason of an unaccountable Shame that the Impure suffer themselves to perish.

And yet it is not to be thought that all who acknowledge their Sin make a saving Confession. Many confess their Fault, but not except in case of Extremity, and when they can deny it no longer. And this Confession they make with so little of Frankness, and such Reserves and Shifts, that it is easily seen it is all forced, and drawn from them by pure Necessity. An evident Token of an Evil, a Wicked and Hard Heart! Every one sees also that they live afterwards in such a manner, as shews no true Amendment. Yet it is only a sincere and ingenuous Confession of Sin that will be available in order to Forgiveness.

2. I have hitherto discoursed of such whose Guilt is known. But it may farther be enquired, Whether those whose Fault is still concealed are obliged to Confess it; and how they are in this case to behave themselves? Which is a weighty Question, and concerns a great part of Mankind, only that it is as nice as weighty.

I say therefore in the first place, that Whilst a Fault is not come abroad, the Offender is not only not obliged to confess it publickly, but that he ought not to confess it in this manner, that he scandalize not the Church, by bringing to its Knowledge a Sin it had otherwise heard nothing of. But then I say this purely upon supposition that this Sin has been kept secret, and he has never been required, nor enter'd into any Obligation to own it in Publick. It is not to be imagined that it was ever allowed to use any unlawful courses for preventing these Faults being made known, such as Lying, false Declarations, the Exposing or Abandoning Children, or those other sinful Means Unclean Persons are wont to make use of for preserving their Faults from a publick Discovery. It were much better that a Fault should become publick, than to conceal it after this manner, this being a means of aggravating it, of putting the Sinner out of a Capacity of Amendment, and of engaging themselves in a Necessity of remaining all his Life in a state of Impenitence, which it is impossible to get out of whilst he makes it his Business to conceal one Wickedness by the help of another.

Well, but suppose the Sin not to be known, what is to be done in this Case? I answer in general, the guilty Person is to endeavour to ease himself of it by a true Repentance. He must omit nothing that is necessary to this purpose; must privately humble himself before God, must amend his Fault, and use all means possible for disburdening his Conscience, must deny himself for some time the participation of the holy Communion, and observe those Duties incumbent upon Offenders, which I am about to mention. But still it may be questioned Whether these Persons are to confess their Sin in Private.

I say

I say a Private Confession may be of very great Advantage, and that upon some Occasions it must be made use of ; it may happen that a Man may be indispensably obliged to it, if the Sinner is perplexed with Scruples, or cannot well enform himself what course he must take to rise again after his Fall, or is in doubt concerning the truth and reality of his Repentance ; it is certain that being in these Circumstances, and so having need of Assistance and Advice, he cannot do better than to apply himself to some Person of known Understanding and Probity. Generally those who are guilty of great Sins, will not know what to do without some help. And it is certain that Multitudes perish for want of Courage to lay themselves open to their Spiritual Physician. Unless the Sinner thoroughly understand his own Case, and his Conscience be tender enough to direct him, a Happiness rarely to be met with amongst the Impure, it is of necessity that he consult some other Person. He may address himself to whomsoever he shall think fit upon such an Occasion, and freely open his Mind to him. But the Ministers of the Gospel being ordained to watch over Men's Souls, and Almighty God having authorized them to pronounce Pardon upon the Terms of the Gospel ; and since it is besides to be presumed that they are better skilled in matters of Religion than their Neighbours, the best course the guilty Sinner can take will be to address himself to his own Spiritual Guide. This was the Practice of the Primitive Church. Publick Penances were appointed amongst the Ancient Christians for publick Sins. But when any had committed a Sin in private, which had it been known, would have required a publick Confession, he then betook himself to the Ministers of the Church, to receive by their means such Advice, Exhortation, and Comfort as his Condition called for.

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But now in order to the putting this in practice, a Man should be fully assured of the Ability, and especially the Probity of these Ministers, so as to have an entire Confidence in them ; and they on the other hand stand engaged to keep what is Confessed as an inviolable Secret. Whence by the way it may be observed, of what mighty importance it is that none but wise, prudent, and discreet, understanding, and truly religious Persons be ever admitted to this sacred Function.

When Sinners thus address themselves to their Spiritual Guides, it is Their Part to give them all necessary Advice, to represent to them the Heinousness of their Sin, to see what Tokens and Assurances they can give of the Sincerity of their Repentance, and to acquaint them what they are to do by way of Reparation for their Sin, or in order to their own Recovery out of it. They should also examine whether their People be fit to receive the holy Sacrament, and to deny them it for some time, till they discover in them the Signs of a real Reformation, and pronounce the Pardon of their Sins.

I speak not here of the private Admonitions they should give to such as live loosely, as they have opportunity, and though never consulted by them, because this is not the proper place for it.

It is not only before † the Priests that People should acknowledge their Faults, but there are some Cases wherein it should be done before others. Thus they ought to own them in the presence of such as are to take cognizance of them in order to their Edification. It is certain they

† Here I render les Pasteurs, the Priests, because it is to the Priests only that our Lord has committed a Power of absolving Penitents.

are to confess them in secret, when there is no other way to prevent the great Mischief that might ensue from a more publick Confession of them. It is a ruled Case, that rather than permit an Incestuous Marriage between two Persons, who neither know nor suspect themselves to be Brother and Sister, but yet are so, one of them being of an impure Birth, the guilty Father or Mother, if no other Method can be contrived for hindring such a Marriage, ought to declare his, or her, Crime, yet with all the Secrecy that may be. But out of this Case of absolute necessity, these kind of Sins are not to be discovered, for fear of the Consequences such a Discovery might have, the Breaches in, and Dishonour of Families, and many other Mischiefs it might produce. A Man should rather seek the Reparation of his Offence by secret Means; only he must be sure to do it with great Sincerity and Honesty, and so as that Conscience be no way entangled by it.

C H A P. III.

The Third Duty of the Unclean, A Reparation of the Evil they have done.

THE Third Duty whereto the Impure stand obliged is to make Reparation for their Sin. It is an uncontroverted Principle of Religion, as well as of natural Justice, that every one must make Satisfaction to the utmost of his Power, for all the Evil he has done; it being evident that without this there is no Repentance, and by consequence no Pardon. He that labours not with all his might to repair a Fault he has committed, or an Injury he has done to another, hereby testifies that

that he does not unfeignedly repent of it, and that he has no true Sense of either Justice, Charity, or Piety. Which Remark I make for the Information of such who conceit that their Sins may be forgiven them, though they do not make Reparation for the Mischief done by them, only upon condition that they repent and fly to the Mercy of God. This is utterly impossible. For Repentance and Recourse to the Divine Mercy are never sincere, till the Sinner uses his hearty endeavour to Repair the Evil he has done.

Now the Reparation Persons are bound to for the Sin of Impurity, respects our Neighbours Interest either Temporal or Eternal.

I. In respect to Temporal Interest a Man may prejudice his Neighbour in his Honour and Reputation, in his Goods, or upon other accounts; and he should therefore make it his Business in each of these Instances, to Repair the Evil he has done. We see in the Law, that God who had ordered Thieves * to make a full Restitution, has ordered * Exod. the same likewise for the Sins of Impurity. † He 22. 3. that had abused a Virgin was to *take her for his Wife*; Numb. 5. and moreover the Law imports that whosoever had † Deut. espoused a Woman after this manner was *never after* 22. 29. *to put her away*. Whereby it appears that one Method of making Amends for this Sin is by marrying the Person who has been seduced. And this is especially to be done when any Promises have been made to each other; supposing withal that they are both free, and in a Capacity of Contracting. If this cannot be, as in many Cases it plainly cannot, and there is no Repairing these Sins by Marriage, some other course must be taken for making Reparation of the Damage done to the

♫ Grot. de Jure belli ac pacis. l. 2. cap. 17. 15.

|| Exod.
22. 17.

Person enticed. The Law of God points out this Duty, || enjoining that *if the Father of the Damself* refused to give her in Marriage to him who had seduced her, the Person seducing should pay a Summ of Money. Whence it follows that one of the ways of Repairing this Crime, when it cannot be done by Marriage, is by giving a Portion, or a Summ proportionable to the Condition of the Person, other Circumstances also considered.

† Sect. 1.
Ch. 1.

Another Duty, and indeed the most indispensable of all with respect to this World, is to procure that no harm be done to the Children born of these unlawful Mixtures, but most diligently to provide for their Support and Education. I have already † treated of this Duty, and have proved that it would be a horrible Crime to cast them off. And not only so, but Provision must be made for their Education and for their Maintenance with so much the more care, because the Condition of these Children is ordinarily very uncomfortable, and they are born into the World in a state of Shame and Misery.

Lastly, There is no manner of doubt but in the Crime of Adultery, Restitution is to be made to those who suffer by it; as when a Father is put to the charge of maintaining a Child that is none of his own, and when a Child that is come into a Family by Adultery, partakes, with the lawful Children and Heirs, of an Estate that does not at all belong to him. In either of these Cases, the guilty Persons are indispensably obliged to Restitution to the Father or the Children. Only this must be sure to be done privately, so long as the Crime is not known; though if it were known, then the Restitution should be publick. Nothing can excuse from this Duty; without which it is impossible the Offenders should have their

their Crime pardoned, save only when they have it by no means in their Power to make such Restitution. And yet even in this Case, they must be sincerely and constantly resolved, to make it as soon as ever they shall be able, and must endeavour it heartily, and to the utmost of their Ability. Nor are they Divines only and Morallists who prescribe this Duty as indispensable; * the Lawyers also declare the Justice and Necessity of it.

This Article should beget a great Abhorrence of Sensuality, and make People tremble at the thoughts of giving themselves up to it. And would they seriously consider it, certainly they could never suffer themselves to be enticed to the filthy Lusts of the Flesh, nor would those who are guilty of it be near so easy as they are for the most part. They would quickly see that by committing this Sin, they plunge themselves into abundance of Misfortunes, they entangle themselves in strange Difficulties, and prepare for themselves terrible Remorse, and cruel Uneasiness. This Reflection Mr. Placcette most judiciously makes in his *Treatise of Restitution*, at the End of the XIIIth Chapter. Having discoursed of the Restitution whereto Persons are obliged in case of Adultery, he concludes thus, *What I have said shews into what Snares, and Troubles, they that commit this great Sin, cast themselves. Which if People would at all mind, perhaps they would shun them more carefully than they do. But they either do not know them, or are not willing to consider them. In a word, Mankind lead their Lives, as if the Violaters of this*

* Grot. de Jur. b. ac p. l. 2. c. 17. 15. *Adulter & Adultera tenentur non tantum, indemnem præstare maritum ab alenda prole, sed & legitimis hæredibus rependere, si quod damnum pariuntur, ex concursu ita susceptæ proliæ ad hæreditatem,*

Law had neither Justice to overawe them, nor Punishment to stand in fear of. I beseech all whom this concerns to reflect upon it in time; and that they will give themselves the trouble of reading the XIth, XIIth, and XIIIth Chapters of that same Treatise, where this Matter is handled at large.

II. I added that Reparation is to be made for the Damage any one has done his Neighbour as to his Spiritual Interest. And this requires two Duties, the one general, and the other particular.

I. The general Duty is to make amends for the Scandal which has been given, either to some who have come to the knowledge of the Crime, or to the whole Church. In the former Case a Man should omit nothing that is necessary for the Edification of those he has scandalized, for comforting such good Christians as are greatly afflicted at these sort of Sins, and above all for hindring those whom he has set so bad a Pattern from sinning after his Example, and for retrieving them from their Sin, if through his fault they have been already drawn into it. In the other Case, He is to make amends for the Scandal he has given the Church, which can be done only by shewing publicly that he is sincerely and humbly Penitent. This was the Practice of the First Christians, and it was exactly conformable to the Spirit of the Gospel. It is clear that scandalous Sinners, and amongst others the Unclean, testifying by their Conversation that they are no true Christians, and separating themselves from the Communion of *Jesus Christ*, as *S. Paul* speaks, *1 Cor. 6.* are not therefore to be looked upon as true Members of the Church, till they change their course of Life, and beg to be restored to the Communion from which they have departed. Thus by the bye it appears, what Notions we should have of Publick Penance. Divers account of it as a Punishment and

and Correction executed upon Sinners, which it is not: It is on the contrary a Favour that is granted them. And hence it was that in the Primitive Church, the Penitents entreated this Favour with Tears, and a great deal of Earnestness. But this holy Practice is now abolished in many Places; and it is very rarely that either Excommunication or Penance is made use of in relation to the Impure.

Which obliges me to add one Consideration more, with respect to those who commit this Sin in places where Ecclesiastical Discipline is grown into disuse; and that is, that they must not be careless and secure upon Pretence that they are not liable to the Laws and Duties of Penance; nor suffer themselves to be prevailed upon by the Liberty that is allowed them of coming to the Holy Mysteries, and enjoying all the Privileges of the External Members of the Church. They should bethink themselves, that neither the Badness of the Times, nor the Opposition of Men, nor the Customs and Laws established by those in Authority, can alter the Laws of Christ. Excommunication is not the less of Divine Right, for being grown out of use. If egregious Sinners are not excommunicated by Men, they are however in the sight of God; they have cut themselves off from Jesus Christ by their disorderly Life; they have broken the Communion they had with the Saints by scandalizing them. So that whatsoever Judgment Men make of them, they ought to judge and condemn themselves, and look upon themselves as separated from their Saviour. Let them therefore be very wary how they approach his Table after the commission of this Sin, but let them abstain for a time, and let them groan by themselves in private; and if their Fault be known, let them give publick Signs

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of a profound Humiliation and Repentance. These are the Advices proper to be given to the Guilty, and which they ought to follow as they would secure their own Salvation. This is what might be said upon this Subject in the mean time, till it shall please God in his good Providence to re-settle Discipline in the Church, and Princes, Magistrates, and People, shall all submit to the Laws of Christ.

2. Besides this general Duty, there is another more particular, and that is to Repair the Injury which has been done to, and provide for the Salvation of, the Person with whom this Wickedness has been committed. For this Sin putting two Persons at the same time into a State of Damnation, it is evident that whether one has been solicited, or has solicited the other, he is obliged to procure by all ways possible, the Conversion of that other with whom he has been engaged in this Crime. This is an important Article, but which is very little thought of. Far from this, the Impure oftentimes put the greatest Impediments in the way of their Accomplices Repentance, and employ all their Art to immerse them deeper in their Guilt. As all those do who tempt them to conceal their Fault by Lying, and making false Declarations; and entice them to use other unlawful means to prevent the Truths being brought to Light.

C H A P. IV.

The Fourth Duty of the Unclean, Conversion.

THE Fourth Duty of such who are chargeable with this Sin is Conversion and Amendment; which is to be wrought by these Four Steps.

I. First to forsake their Sin; and continue no longer in it. When our blessed Saviour pardoned the Woman taken in Adultery, he said to her, ** Go and sin no more.* The Crime must therefore ** S. Jo: 8. 11.* be totally Renounced; and they which do not this, but relapse into it, have not Repented of it. Every Act, and every Repetition of their Sin, is an Aggravation of both their Guilt and Punishment. This is so easily comprehended, that there will be no occasion to shew it more at large.

II. But this is but the Beginning of Conversion; and this first Step will be to no purpose if the Offenders stop here. It is not enough to renounce their Crime, without renouncing likewise all the Approaches to it, all the several Species of Impurity, and all the Defilements of either Body or Mind; all lewd Actions, wanton Glances, impure Thoughts and Desires, together with such Familiarities as expose to Temptation, all obscene Discourse or Expressions, and which are contrary to Chastity. It is true this Renunciation may appear Difficult at first, and will occasion no small Trouble, to those that have contracted a vicious Habit of giving themselves up to all sorts of Passions. But People must courageously resolve to overcome themselves, it being far better to deny themselves in some things, and to cross their

† S. Mat.
5. 29.

their own Inclinations than to perish eternally. † *It is profitable for them that one of their Members should perish; and not that their whole Body should be cast into Hell-fire.* Moreover, the Difficulty that is herein is of no long Continuance; and I shall shew that it is not too great to be overcome.

There are two Reasons, why it is necessary to renounce all these Species of Impurity. First because they will be apt to make Men fall again into the Crime. And then because a true Repentance is inconsistent with Defilement. The Soul is not changed, whilst it is not pure, but preserves a Kindness for these filthy and shameful Passions. The Soul and the Body are polluted by unchast Desires and Actions. In a word, where-soever there is any love of Sin, there is no true Reformation.

By this Rule any one may know that there are many false and hypocritical Conversions. Many abstain from the Crime and renounce it, who in the mean time are neither chaste in Body, nor in Heart. Their Soul is always full of lascivious Desires and Imaginations; they are dissolute in their Actions and in their Speech; they give themselves a full Liberty, and satisfy themselves in every thing but only the very Crime. This is an evident Mark of Corruption, and Impenitence; and they may assure themselves that it is only upon worldly Considerations, they do not deliver themselves up to the utmost Excesses.

III. It suffices not barely to fly Impurity, but in the Third Place, they must shew forth their Repentance by a Life of Mortification, partly for the satisfaction of those who have been scandalized at them, and partly for defending themselves against Temptations and Relapses. It being the Flesh that has put them upon sinning, it is but reasonable that this be tamed by Severity
and

and Fasting. The carnal Appetite, and love of Pleasures and worldly Joy, must be brought into subjection. A Man must in token of his Humiliation, and by way of Prevention for the future, mortify himself in all things, and especially in those he has most kindness for, and where they are not exprelly forbidden him. If it be a general Doctrine among Christians, ** not to take* ^{* Rom. 13. 14.} *care of the Flesh,* † to mortify the Body, or to keep ^{† 1 Cor. 9. 27.} *it under and bring it into subjection,* none has more reason for the Observance of these Injunctions, than those whom the Passions of the Flesh have drawn into Sin. A Love of Pleasures, and Compliance with the Flesh are no where more highly blameable, than in such as are guilty of Impurity. And it must also be granted that when any one is touched with a lively Sense of this Crime, he goes no longer in quest of these vain Delights, he is not then in a Condition to rejoyce and please himself, but places his Consolation rather in the Exercises of Repentance. Diversions and frivolous Entertainments, reading vain Authors, Dressing, and the care of the Body, all these make but faint Impressions on him. And no less on the contrary, when those that have been Impure, and Dissolute, and who have left off to sin as they have grown into Years, do not mortifie themselves, when they love their Ease, and make it their study to obtain the Pleasures and Advantages of Life, passing their Time in Idleness, or at Play, and setting their Minds upon Dainties and sumptuous Entertainments, most certainly these are yet in a state of Impenitence, and have never been truly sensible of their Fault, nor duly set themselves to make amends for it.

IV. In the last place, The sincerity of a Sinner's Conversion must appear not only in the things

which have relation to Impurity, but in the whole course of his Conversation. So great a Fall should render a Man wise, pious, circumspect, in all things. All that is in him is to become new. He should take occasion from every thing to shew his Repentance, to discharge his Duty towards God, to edify his Neighbour, and to purify himself more and more. He ought with great exactness and sincerity to practise the Duties of Religion, to give himself to Meditation, and Prayer, and to be constant in holy Exercises. He ought to do all the good Works he shall be able, and especially to employ his Goods to the Uses of Piety and Charity, following the Counsel of the Prophet *Daniel*, † *Redeeming their Sins by Alms, and their Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor*. In one word, He should be sure to neglect nothing of all that may evidence a sincere Conversion.

† Dan. 4.
37.

See here one way whereby to distinguish betwixt a true and a false Repentance; and how a great part of the World deceive themselves. The Guilty of Lasciviousness think it enough to leave that Sin; yet they stick not at others, and their Conversation is very disorderly upon many accounts. Now to what purpose is it to lay aside one Sin, and take up others in its room? This alone is an abundant proof that such have never truly Repented; What they call a Reformation being only an Exchange of one Passion for another. He that lived in Sensuality has left off his wonted Extravagances, because Age has cooled his Passion, or else he is Married and has a Family to provide for, or is in an eminent Post, or such other Circumstances as require him to live regularly, and suffer him not to follow his own Inclinations. But he is not at all the better Man for this; but is still Covetous, or Ambitious, or a Swearer,

Swearer, or an Incendiary, or an † Usurer, or a Drunkard. It is very usual after People have spent their Youth in Pleasures, to devote the remainder of their Life to Ambition and Covetousness. Yet all the while they impose upon themselves, and will by all means believe that they are well amended, because they do not go on in the same Sins they had practised formerly. They do not now commit the same Sins they did in their younger Years, but yet they commit others instead of them that they were not then acquainted with. Wherein there is so little Amendment that it is rather an Enhancement of their Condemnation, as being an addition of Sin to Sin. And yet after this Manner do a great number of Persons become successively Slaves to these three Passions, Pleasure, Pride, and Avarice. Besides abundance of others in whom none of these Passions is extinct, but they reign all at once, and though grown into Years they are nevertheless impure, ambitious, and miserably addicted to their Interest. I conclude therefore that there must be a general Reformation. If a Man be a real Penitent, he will shew this in his whole Conversation, in his outward Deportment, in his Discourse, in his Employment, in his Family, if he has one, and in all his Affairs; throughout the whole his Management will be according to the Rules of the exactest Justice, and the Dictates of a tender Conscience. This is the Character of a true Penitent.

† This I take to intend one that is very griping and unreasonable in his Demands; since if all it means were only one that takes a moderate Interest for Money, such a Practice though forbidden amongst the *Jews* to those of their own Nation, will however be very hardly proved unlawful amongst Christians, our Blessed Saviour having nowhere condemned it in his Gospel. As has been fully proved not only by *Salmasius* and Others formerly, but by a learned Writer to whom our Author himself appeals upon another Occasion. *Mr. La Placette, Second Traité sur des Matieres de Conscience*

And thus I have shewn what are the Duties of those who have fallen into the Sins of Impurity. But as I have said, they are not so appropriated to the guilty of the Crime, but that all others who, though free from the Crime, are not yet every way pure and chaste, may and ought to apply them to themselves.

* St. Lu.
7. 47.

Happy are the Guilty that discharge these Duties aright, who with the sinful Woman in St. *Luke's* Gospel, weep bitterly for their Faults, who have confessed them, and made Reparation for them, and have renounced and forsaken them! * *Their Sins, though great, shall be forgiven them.* These are by no means to be despised. For there is a great deal of Love and Tenderness due to all Sinners, but more especially to such as forsake their wicked ways, and cause *Joy in Heaven* by their Return. And it would be a great Sin to reject those whom God has taken into his Favour.

But what shall we say of Sinners that neglect these Duties, and continue in their Pollution and their Crime? How sad a state must that Man be in, who not only feels his Conscience accusing him of this Sin, but who besides has taken no care to make amends for it, and who, miserable Wretch as he is, heaps Sin upon Sin, and Crime upon Crime? But above all, what can be thought of those who, laden with their Sins, live however in Security? How is it they are so blind as not to see into what a deplorable Condition they have brought themselves? Or whence is it they are so easy under these Circumstances? How and in what manner do they hope to end their Lives? Can they promise themselves to obtain the Pardon of their Sins, before they leave this World? I entreat, I beseech, I conjure them to enquire what Ground they have to flatter themselves with any such Hope. I beg of them to reflect upon
what

what they have read, but withal to do it very seriously, for after all it is what deserves to be well considered. It is not their Business to drive these Thoughts from their Mind, and live like Beasts, letting loose the Reins to their Sensuality, and hardening themselves in their Guilt, and so to go down unconcernedly to the Grave. This is the utmost height of Blindness and Brutality; in as much as Death is every day drawing nearer, after which every one must enter upon an Estate from whence there is no Returning.

If to obtain the Pardon of this Sin, the Duties I have mentioned are necessarily to be performed, it seems to me plainly to follow, their Hope is every way groundless and deceitful, who put off their Conversion, and yet promise themselves to find Favour with God at the end of their Life. For Death may snatch away the Sinner without allowing him time to bewail his Sin. But admitting his Circumstances to be such as will allow him time for Reflection; what sort of Reflections will he make, when his Conscience shall set before him the Mis-carriages of his Life, and shall especially reproach him for those Sins which draw others after them, and for which he ought to have made Reparation. Oh the miserable state, will he say to himself, whereto I find myself reduced! Oh that whilst I was in Health, and had Time allowed me, I had taken care to clear my Conscience! But I have persevered in my Sins, I have added one Provocation to another, I have put Obstructions in the way to my Repentance; and have brought myself to that pass, that I know neither how to confess, nor how to make amends for them. And now at length I am come to my last Day, I am laid upon that Bed from whence I shall rise no more, but must go to appear before my God, and thither shall I carry into his Presence a guilty Conscience,

science, a Body and a Soul polluted and laden with Filth. Now things appear with much another Countenance than they had formerly. Now Terrors and Remorse begin to shew themselves, and the Sinner is seized with horrible Anguish. Now he would make Restitution. Now he condemns himself for having deceived a Parent, and done Injury to the Children. Now he would crave the Priest's Advice, and would fain learn how to set his Conscience at ease. But it is now too late, he has no more time left, he is dying, and has already lost his Strength and Understanding.

I am well aware that Man must not pretend to set bounds to Divine Mercy ; nor exclude a Sinner from Pardon upon condition he be touched with a lively and unfeigned Repentance, and which proceeds not merely from a fear of Death; supposing also that he in good truth does all he is able to confess and make amends for his Sin, and gives all the Tokens possible of a sincere Repentance, not being withheld from it by Shame, or any worldly Consideration whatsoever. But besides that this is a very uncomfortable manner of a Christians ending his Life, and he will meet with a great deal of dissatisfaction in it ; it is farther to be remembred that there are very few, that after a Life of Sensuality, end their days with a saving Repentance, especially amongst those who have committed such Faults as have need of Confession and Reparation, and have endeavoured by one Sin to conceal another. Some have been racked and tortured upon their Death-bed with these dire Reflections : And some being called upon and exhorted to confess and make amends for their Sins, whereof they have been publicly accused, and of which they were certainly guilty, but yet had solemnly protested themselves innocent, have died without ever being brought to own the Truth,

Truth. When Men have made these advances towards the concealing their Wickedness, it is very rarely that they will recede from them; but they will choose rather to damn themselves through a false Shame and point of Honour.

Whence it appears that all who abandon themselves to the Crime, cast themselves into an Abyss of Miseries. A dreadful State indeed! No wise Man sure would ever knowingly bring himself into such cruel Perplexities; it is so easy, and so reasonable to prevent it by discharging his Conscience, and doing as he ought. How then ought ye to enter upon these Reflections, all you that have contracted a Habit of Licentiousness. You are called to do it now; and if ye do it not, you will one day bewail and detest your own brutish Security. No doubt you persuade yourselves that you shall never be so unhappy, and that you shall have better Sentiments hereafter; but the longer you shall expect, the worse you will find it with you; the longer you shall live, the more unwilling you will be to take up a Resolution that you will not be invited to at present. Your Return to God is not the work of a Moment; but there is need of Time to free yourselves from the Bonds and Snares whereinto Men are brought by Incontinence, to make amends for your Sin; to root out evil Habits, and to purify the Heart. To be informed of all which Truths, and not to make a good use of them, is but to run upon Destruction, and prepare for yourselves an extremely doleful End.

These Considerations are also offered you, who are yet in the Age of Youth. Be affected with them, and hearken rather to the Voice of God and the Counsels of Wisdom than to your own Passions. You are young, you are in Health, you put from you the thoughts of a Reformation, but
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you are hastening continually towards Death, and may be surprized by it much sooner than you imagine. Wherefore reckon not upon the time to come; nor flatter yourselves that you shall be converted when Age shall have worn off your impure Passions. The Flames of Impurity burn even in those of elder Years; and if they dye away in some, those of other Passions are kindled in them. There is too much Danger in suffering ourselves to be surprized by the Temptations of Voluptuousness; but much more in wilfully delivering ourselves up to them, in despite of all the Admonitions we meet with to the contrary. From one Sin People pass on to another, and so their Habits come to be confirmed; they sin, and think of nothing but hiding their Sin whatsoever it cost them, till at length they find themselves in an Estate out of which there is no Recovery; because they can no more resolve to do what is necessary for the discharge of their Conscience. Blessed therefore is he that waits not till Death to amend his Faults! But much more blessed he, whose Youth is chaste, and always kept within Bounds! His Life cannot fail of being Pure, or his Death of being Happy.

Here I conclude the former part of this Work, in which I have propounded to treat of Unclean-ness. I shall now proceed to the other, wherein I am to discourse of Chastity.

The End of the Former Part.

PART II.

OF

CHASTITY.

VICE and Virtue being two Opposites, in keeping at a distance from the One, we by this means approach the Other. And so Chastity being the opposite Virtue to Uncleanness, what has been hitherto discoursed of that Vice, has a natural tendency to render Persons Chast. Yet not so fully but that it will be requisite to treat also of Chastity in particular. And the rather because this Virtue is not thoroughly understood; a great part of Mankind not knowing the Nature and Duties of it; few apprehending what is to be done in order to it; and fewer yet being willing to be at the Pains of acquiring it. My Design therefore in the Second Part of this Work is to speak of Chastity, and to shew these three things. First, what Chastity is; Secondly, what are the Motives to it; and thirdly, what Means are to be made use of in order to our being Chast. The first of which Articles will explain the Nature of this Duty; the next will invite to practise it; and the last will render the Practise of it easy.

SECTION

SECTION I.

CHAP. I.

Of Chastity in General.

CHastity is a preservation of ourselves both Souls and Bodies pure and exempt from the Pollution of Uncleanness. St. Paul describes it in these terms, *1 Thes. IV. 3, 4. This is the Will of God, that ye should abstain from Fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his Vessel in Sanctification and Honour.* Whereby he first shews that Chastity consists in abstaining from Uncleanness, and preserving the Body pure. For this term of *Vessel*, or * Instrument, signifies the Body, which is as a Vessel wherein the Soul dwells, or as an Instrument by the help of which it executes its Designs. St. Paul speaks of the Body, because Uncleanness is properly a Sin of the Body and Flesh, as is said *1 Cor. 6. 18.* and *Rom. 1. 24.* But though the Apostle speaks of the Body, Chastity concerns the Mind also. The truth is, the Apostle would have us possess our Bodies in Purity; but we cannot keep our Bodies pure without the help of the Mind. It is the Soul's Business to guard the Body, to govern it, and keep it in subjection; and it belongs not to the Body to have dominion over the Soul. When a Man follows the Motions of the Body, then the Body guides the Soul and drags it along; it is the Flesh that rules, and the Soul is become its Slave. But when † *through the Spirit we mortify the*
Deeds

* So the
Word seems
to be used
A^ct. 9. 15.

† Rom. 8.
14.

Deeds and Passions of the Body, as St. Paul speaks, then the Body is brought into subjection, and the Soul preserves its Authority over it, as in reason it ought. It is plain therefore that Chastity respects both Body and Mind, and that it consists in the Purity of both the One and the Other of these Parts of ourselves. As is implied in these Words of St. Paul, wherein he gives a Description of one who lives in entire Chastity. || The unmarried Woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in Body and in Spirit. || 1 Cor. 7. 34.

2. But the Apostle teaches that to keep our Bodies pure, it is not enough to refrain from all unlawful and immodest Behaviour, and abstain from Impurity; but there is something more than this required, and these Words *to keep the Body in Holiness, or Sanctification, and Honour*, import that we are to use them purely, and to employ them to holy Purposes, worthy of that Christianity we make Profession of, and acceptable in the sight of God. This is the general Notion a Man should form to himself of Chastity.

C H A P. II.

Of the First Branch of Chastity, with respect to what is forbidden.

BUT to give a more distinct Character of Chastity, it contains two general Duties. The former of which respects the Government of our Lives as to things forbidden, the other as to things allowed us.

To begin with the former of these Duties, we must observe there are four Degrees of Chastity. The First is an Abstinence from the Crime; the

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Second is a Refraining from other Impure Actions ; the Third is a Resistance of evil Desires ; and the Fourth is an Exemption from, or Mastery over them.

I. The First Duty of Chastity is to renounce the Crimes of Uncleaness, such as Adultery and Fornication ; as is plain from the Words of *St. Paul* *1 Thess. IV. 3, 4.* recited in the foregoing Chapter. Every one easily perceives that this is the first degree of Chastity ; this is so manifest, it needs only to be hinted. But however there are two Inferences proper to be mentioned in this place. First, if to abstain from the Crime be the first Degree of Chastity, then is it the lowest Step or Degree of it ; and this alone that a Man is not plunged into the Crime, is neither the Effect of true Virtue, nor the Subject of any great Praise. Secondly, We must beware of accounting all those chaste who are free from the Crimes of Uncleaness. It must be enquired upon what grounds they refrain from them ; because if it be only for want of Ability, or because they dare not gratify their brutish Passion for fear of exposing themselves to some worldly Disadvantage, there is no Chastity in this, nor will they be reputed innocent before God. Those only are chaste, who have abstained from the Crime out of a Principle of Virtue and Piety. And accordingly as this Principle is more or less powerful, so is Chastity more or less advanced.

They who shun the Crime out of an unfeigned Fear of displeasing God, but yet with Difficulty and Conflicts, have together with their vicious Inclinations some measure of Chastity ; but those have carried their Virtue to a great height, who have such an Abhorrence of the Crime, as to find themselves under no Temptation to the commission of it. It was by this that *Joseph* deserved the Praise of a consummate Chastity, when being sol-

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licited to the Crime, exposed to a most insinuating Temptation, and this in an Age, and in other Circumstances the most capable that might be of enticing one not firmly addicted to Virtue, he resisted this Temptation, he resisted it divers times, and at last rejected it with Detestation and Horror; saying, * *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?* * Gen. This Victory obtained over the Temptation presents 39. 9. us with an Instance of an accomplished Chastity, and which includes in it the other Degrees of this Virtue. But all that abstain from the Crime are not arrived at this measure of Purity; they do not all reject the Temptation with this firm, ready, and generous Resolution, which not only causes a Man to hesitate, but shews him to be smitten with Horror at the first appearance of the Crime. However they do refrain; and do it because withheld by a Principle of Religion and Conscience. This is the first Degree of Chastity.

II. But to proceed. This Duty of Chastity implies in it an Abstinence from all impure Actions, whether unchast in themselves, or only conducing to what may defile. I have noted in the former part of this Treatise some Actions that are prejudicial to Chastity, and have laid down some Rules whereby they may be distinguished. And it shall therefore suffice in this place only to observe, that it is the part of Chastity neither to do nor say any thing that is immodest, but to be very pure and very circumspect in both Actions and Words, that nothing that is dissolute or too wanton may escape us. Chastity governs the Hands and the whole Body, that none touch themselves, or others, or suffer themselves to be touched in too free and indecent a manner. Chastity governs the Eyes, and causes to withdraw them from such Objects or Writings as might seduce the Heart, that we never read nor look at what may tend to excite impure

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Thoughts.

Thoughts. This Virtue is also a profest Enemy to Luxury and Immodesty in Cloathing, and teaches a grave and inoffensive Carriage, and banishes vain Discourse, foolish Mirth, and excessive and scandalous Diversions. Lastly, this Virtue when once well settled in the Heart, makes a Man exact and cautious in all these Particulars, and to keep his Body and his Senses under great Restraint.

III. The Third Degree of Chastity is a Resistance of those Thoughts and Motions of the Soul which tend to Impurity. These kind of Thoughts seduce Persons, when they raise such Lusts in them as obtain their Desire, and the full Consent of their Will, or when they barely entertain them in their Minds, but so as to take pleasure in them. Both which are contrary to Chastity. And the chaste Man therefore is one who not only allows not himself to be transported by irregular Motions, nor only just forbears the Desire of the Crime, but who does not pollute himself with the simple Thoughts of the Pleasure, and with foolish and impure Imaginations, but rejects and repels these Thoughts. Then a Man has attained to this Virtue, when he has learned to be Master of his own Heart, and to keep his Thoughts and Desires in subjection. When the Objects that present themselves, or the Discourse we hear, or the Imagination or Memory raise up sensual Thoughts or Ideas, a chaste Person will not allow them to enter the Heart, or so much as to come near it. This is one of the great and principal Duties of Chastity, to resist those Motions of the Soul which tend to Lust, so as that if a Man unhappily feel such Motions in himself, he studies to repress them, and at least to prevent their becoming Voluntary.

IV. Lastly, There is a Fourth Degree of Chastity, which is the highest of all, and that is to be entirely,

entirely, or at least very near exempt from these Thoughts and Desires I have been speaking of. It has been observed upon this Occasion, that there is a difference between Continence and Chastity. The former of these Vertues is said to consist in containing ourselves, and refraining when we find ourselves solicited to Evil; that it is a Resisting the sensual Motions that arise in the Soul; and keeping the Passions in order, which supposes a Person to be tempted, and that he is not chaste without some struggle and conflict. But as to the other it is said that a Man has attained to true Chastity, when he is free from evil Desires, and the Rebellion of his Passions, without being exposed to any conflict with them. It was S. Jerom's Saying, * that *He who is Continent is in the way of Vertue, but is not yet arrived at the top of it, in as much as the Desires of the Flesh spring up in the Soul of him that contains himself, and pollute his Soul, though they do not prevail over, and draw him into the Crime.* But this Article has need of some farther Illustration.

For it is questioned whether there is a possibility of being exempt from impure Thoughts and Desires, and whether any have attained to that pass as to take no Pleasure in Thoughts that tend to Impurity, so as to have no Sense of any vicious Motion in their Soul with respect to this Sin. For my own part I doubt not but this State may be attained to, and that there are Persons to whom Almighty God has vouchsafed this Favour; and especially amongst those who from their Youth,

* *Hieron. in Gal. cap. V, Continentia in viâ quidem virtutis est, sed nec dum pervenit ad calcem; quia cupiditates adhuc in ejus qui se continet cogitatione nascuntur, & mentis polluunt principale, licet non superent, nec ad opus pertrahant cogitantem.*

together with a happy Constitution, and good Education, have had a solid Piety and a large share of Modesty and abhorrence of this Vice, and have always kept themselves at a distance from it. The greater Progress any one makes in Chastity, and the more rarely wanton Thoughts disturb him, the more they lose of their force; and there is no reason why it may not be believed that there are some who have them not; and that what is a Temptation to others, is to these no more than as a Spark that lights in the Water, or an Arrow shot against a Rock.

I will add something here concerning Sleep. A chaste Person is so when he is asleep. Men are ordinarily such in the Night, and in their Dreams, as they are in the Day-time. I speak not of what is involuntary and purely natural. The Constitution of the Body, and the Imagination may produce unusual and strange Effects in Sleep and Dreams; but Chastity is not impaired by this, provided there be nothing of the Will in it, and that a Person do not give occasion for it, but all the time he is awake endeavours a great Purity. Moreover impure Dreams and Fancies, and disorderly Motions, are a sign that the Flesh is not yet brought into subjection. These are the Fruits either of a vicious Inclination to Sensuality, or of Intemperance in Eating or Drinking, or of a Memory and Imagination filled with sensual Ideas, and impure Objects. I have touched this Point concerning Sleep in very few Words; but there is a great deal included in them, that deserves larger and serious Reflexions.

C H A P. III.

Of the Second Branch of Chastity, with respect to what is Lawful.

Temperance prescribes Rules not only with respect to things forbidden and sinful, but likewise to things allowed and lawful; and if we are obliged wholly to abstain from the one, so are we not always to make use of the other. This latter Duty is of very great Importance, and calls for our particular Consideration.

For Men are more easily drawn to sin in things allowed, than in those forbidden. In regard to these latter, the knowledge of their being forbidden keeps many in awe; but in things allowed the most part observe no Rule, but think themselves free to use their utmost Liberty; and so destroy Vertue and Piety; it being impossible in this Case not to pass from what is permitted to what is forbidden. A thing may be allowed to a certain degree, and in some Circumstances only; but how few contain themselves within these Bounds, and do not proceed farther than they ought? It is slippery treading here, and there is infinite Danger in being willing always to have our fill of things allowed. By satisfying our Desires in these things the Passions get such Dominion over us, that we shall not be able to refuse them any thing; and so by pleasing ourselves with what is allowed, shall be carried on to what is not. Besides Persons should stint themselves in things allowed, lest by being wont constantly to please themselves, they come to be enslaved to their Passions. It is essential to Piety and Vertue

to mortify the Will and bring it into subjection. But especially Care should be taken and great Circumspection used in those things which are pleasant and delightful, and so become strong Temptations. Though a Man should never venture upon what is unlawful, too great an Affection for sensible things, and too ready a Compliance with the bent of our own Will, will not easily consist with true Piety; it will make the Heart too fond of the World and its Enjoyments, and will necessarily abate its Love of God, and its Diligence in seeking after the heavenly Treasures, and that submission, which all are to pay to the Divine Will. Which shews it to be a Maxim in the Christian Ethicks, that things Lawful are not to be abused. *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient*, 1 Cor. 10. 23.

To apply this to our present Subject, it is observable that Temperance lays down two Rules in respect to lawful things; never to use them but with Moderation; and sometimes wholly to refrain from them. When we speak of Chastity there is but one thing permitted, and that is Marriage; and we must therefore take notice of two Degrees of Chastity in this respect; 1st, A Care not to abuse this State; 2dly, An entire Renunciation of it.

I. In the first place we must be sure not to abuse it. Marriage is common to all the People in the World; but it will by no means become Christians, who know it is a holy State instituted by God, to enter into, and live in it after a sensual manner, as the Pagans do, and those Nations who have never been blessed with the Light of the Gospel. Here therefore are two Duties to be attended to, to enter upon it purely, and to live purely in it.

1. Marriage being a holy Society, Christians are to enter into it holily and with Reverence, and to order their Conversation in it, not according to the Directions of the Flesh and Senses, but according to those of Reason and Religion. That general Rule of the Apostle, who orders † *all things* † Coloss. 3. 17. *to be done in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, is more especially to be put in practice upon this occasion, as being one of the most important affairs of our whole Life. And it is not therefore without great reason that the usage of beginning Marriage with Acts of Religion has been established in the Church. As indeed it had also been among the Heathens. Christians should always perform this Office so as that they may be able to assure themselves our Lord Christ is present with them, and sanctifies them by his Blessing. But Piety has commonly little to do in Marriages; and though the Church's Blessing, and Prayer are used at them, these solemn Devotions are not attended to, nor looked upon otherwise than as a Formality. Marriage is often no better than the effect of sensuality; This Estate so holy in it self is with many people only as a Cover for their Shame. They marry to avoid Disgrace, and upon force, because of the ill consequents of their impure manner of Life. Such Marriages are rather a continued Impurity veiled under a creditable Name, than a chaste and Christian Ordinance. Not to say any thing here of the strange Licentiousness and Dissoluteness that accompanies these Weddings, and the foolish, immodest, and scandalous Merriment which is usual upon these Occasions. Which things considered it is not to be wondered, that so many Matches succeed no better; that such as marry not out of a wise and reasonable Affection, or an Esteem founded upon Vertue, but upon some sudden Passion, or Necessity, or to save their Ho-

nour, do in a little time dislike one another; that they agree very ill, that their Children are badly educated, and that they fall sometimes into great Crimes.

2. The other Duty of Married Persons is to live purely and free from Sensuality. The remains of Natural Light in the Heathens taught them that Marriage was to be chaste and modest, and that every thing was not allowable in it. St. Paul shews what Notion we should have of it, when he tells us such as are coupled together by this sacred Bond shou'd separate themselves sometimes to betake themselves to Fasting and Prayer. These Rules which the Scripture lays down in regard to whatsoever concerns the Body, the World, and the Things of this Life, that *† all that is lawful may not be done at all times*, that ** Provision must not be made for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof*, and that *|| they that use this World are not to abuse it*; these Rules, I say, respect Marriage likewise, and make it very clear that Persons ought to live chaste in it. We may sin, and that very grievously too, against Purity, in that Estate though lawful. Our Religion requires us to mortify our Passions, and above all our sensual Desires. And therefore we must manage ourselves so as may correct our Sensuality, but may by no means promote it. We must labour to become spiritual, not voluptuous and animal. In every Estate we must try to obtain such a disposition of Mind, as that we may apply ourselves to what is well pleasing to Almighty God, and may make us everlastingly happy. And if Marriage has been ordain'd as a Remedy against Uncleaness, we must not turn our Remedy into Poison. Those that do so are highly culpable, and have ensnared themselves by marrying. This Article is of singular importance, and affords matter for many Reflections, but it is one of those that I am constrained to shorten.

II. The

† 1 Cor.

6. 12.

* Rom.

13. 14.

|| 1. Cor.

7. 31.

II. The second degree of Chastity with respect to what is lawful, is to renounce Marriage, and live in Celibacy. St. Paul comparing the State of the Married with that of the Unmarried, gives the Preference to the latter, as to a sort of Life, which frees a Man from many Inconveniences, Distractions, and Troubles, which attend Marriage, especially in times of Persecution. He says, * that † 1 Cor. *this Estate gives more Liberty for the Service of God*; 7. 33. that || *the unmarried Woman careth for the things of the* || v. 34. *Lord, that she may be holy both in Body and Spirit*; that ‡ *it was good for the unmarried to abide even as* ‡ v. 8. *himself*; and that * *he who gives not his Virgin in* * v. 38. *Marriage does better than he who gives her*. But then he speaks this only upon supposition of living chastely in Celibacy, and being inviolably continent; inasmuch where this is wanting, he declares. ∴ *it* ∴ v. 9. *is better to marry than to burn*.

The Primitive Christians were likewise of the same Persuasion. They condemned not Marriage, no not in either Bishops or Presbyters; but yet they commended a single Life, and many amongst them of both Sexes chose to continue in it; though without ever obliging themselves by an irrevocable Vow to remain so all their Days. A forced Celibacy is a most dangerous State, and inevitably entangles Persons in a thousand Temptations, and terrible Miscarriages. I have already observed that the Law of Celibacy has been the Cause of infinite Irregularities; and that abundance of People live in Uncleanness, because they will not enter into a married State. Not but that Celibacy is assuredly a very happy State, where Centinence is carefully preserved.

Here those who are not married ought to learn their Duty; nor can they be too studious of Purity. This is what the Younger Sort should above all things apply themselves to; their great Duty, the

the Mark they should always have their Eye upon, being to preserve Chastity. To this purpose they are to be vigilant and scrupulous as to whatever wounds this Virtue, and not to give themselves any Liberty in this respect, considering the great Hazard there is in offering Violence to Chastity, and that the Breaches made here are rarely to be cured. He that is not chaste in his younger Years, is sure to feel either sooner or later dreadful Consequences of his Folly. There will continue sad Reminders of it, its Ideas will return, the Fire will kindle again in his full Age, perhaps when he is grown old; and if he do not repent he is irrecoverably ruined; if he does repent, how is he forced to condemn and reproach himself? But on the other hand, Oh the Happiness of such an one who has kept himself pure from his Youth, and has never been acquainted with these corrupt Passions! How many other Delights does he meet with, besides those of sensual Pleasure! Virtue is always lovely wheresoever it appears; but more especially in young Persons, it being highly commendable to follow its Precepts, in an Age wherein the heat of the Passions may be so easily blown up, and such a Beginning promising moreover happy Fruits to follow through the several Stages of their Life. But of all the Virtues none shines in young Persons more gloriously than Chastity and Continence. Nothing is more beautiful, nothing more worthy of Esteem, or more acceptable in the sight of God, than to be pure in Youth.

What I have said to those in Celibacy calls upon me to give some Direction to those in Widowhood. For the same Duties are incumbent upon them, and they ought to be so much the more careful to preserve themselves chaste, because of their being more exposed to Temptations, and

in more Danger of sinking under them ; because Purity is a harder Task to those that have been married, than if they had always continued single. This chiefly concerns Widows, who are not to abuse the Liberty which their Estate gives them, and the easiness of satisfying their Passions, which they had not whilst they were under the power of a Husband. No, their principal Care should be to live in great Purity, and more than usual Reservedness, they must not content themselves to abstain from the Crime, and whatsoever is impure or unchast, but they must live prudently, modestly, and retiredly, and not seek after vain Ornaments, Pleasures, Feasts, and the Company and Conversation of those of the other Sex. They must apply themselves to the Education of their Children, if they have any, and to do good Works. These are the Duties the holy Scripture enjoyns Christian Widows ; as may be seen in the Character given of them by St. Paul, 1 Tim. v. 5, 10. *She that is a Widow indeed trusteth in God, and continueth in Supplications and Prayers night and day ; she is well reported of for good Works, for having brought up Children, having lodged Strangers, having washed the Saints Feet, having relieved the Afflicted, and diligently followed every good Work.* See also what a Description he gives of Widows that have abused their Estate by living in Pleasure, v. 13. *They are idle, wandring about from House to House ; they are Tatlers also and Busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.* He professes likewise v. 6. that *Widows who live in Pleasure, are dead while they live.* Than which nothing can be said more expressly to shew that Widows ought to live in Modesty, Circumspection, and great Purity.

SECTION

SECTION II.

Of the Motives to Chastity.

HAVING shewn the Nature of this Virtue of Chastity, I proceed now to the Motives which oblige us all to be chaste. And the truth is, very powerful ones may be inferred from what has been hitherto discoursed. If we attend to what has been said of Uncleanneſs, and all the Reasons alledged for proving the Turpitude of this Vice ; or to the Conſequences of it, and the Condition to which People are brought by it ; the other Sins into which it draws them, and the Misfortunes to which it expoſes them ; or to what is neceſſary in order to a Recovery out of it, and for making Amends for it, where it has been committed ; or laſtly to what has been ſaid of Chastity, theſe are all ſo many powerful and preſſing Motives to this Virtue. But it is not my Deſign to go over theſe Conſiderations again, but only to preſent the Reader with the chief Motives we have to Chastity.

C H A P. I.

*The First Motive, The Nature of the
Virtue.*

I Take my first Argument for Chastity from the Nature of the Virtue it self ; wherein I find three things that ought strongly to incite to the Practice of it, the Necessity, the Beauty, and the Easiness of it.

I. Chastity is a Virtue absolutely necessary. I do not stand to prove here that it is a Duty which Almighty God has most expressly required ; because if we insist only upon the Nature of the Virtue itself, it must be owned to be of indispensable Necessity.

I. It is utterly impossible to practise the Christian Virtues without mortifying the Senses and the Inclinations of the Flesh ; a fondness for the Passions and Pleasures of Sense being inconsistent with Virtue. This is so undoubted a Truth, that there is no need to have recourse to the Testimony of the Gospel for the proof of it. The Light of Nature teaches it ; and each one's own Experience will convince him, that the progress any makes in the Practice of Virtue, bears a proportion to the Care he has taken to moderate his Passions. But this is also very evidently asserted in the Gospel. St. Peter admonishes, us that it *† is dangerous to follow the Lusts of the Flesh, and that they war against the Soul.* *† 1 S. Pet.* The holy Scripture represents the Flesh as the Cause of Sin, and the Spirit as the Principle of all Virtues. St. Paul declares these two to be plainly irreconcilable to each other ; that the Inclinations of the Flesh are opposite to those of the Spirit, and that

that the motions of the Spirit are no less contrary to those of the Flesh. *The Flesh*, says the Apostle, *lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these are contrary one to the other*, Gal. 5. 17. Which being the true state of the Case, one of them must necessarily yield to the other. Where the Flesh prevails those Christian Virtues which are the Fruits of the Spirit, such as *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance*, v. 22, 23. are made to give way. And where the Spirit governs those Sins which are the fruits of the Flesh such as *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanliness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Strifes*, and the rest of the Sins the Apostle reckons up, v. 19, 20, 21. can no longer domineer. Whence we see the great and principal Advice Religion gives us is to resist the Flesh and its Desires, to crucify it, and to bring the Body into subjection; in a Word, to live after the Spirit, and not after the Flesh. And forasmuch as amongst all our fleshly Passions, there is none more violent than that which tempts to Impurity, nor that is attended with more dreadful Consequents, when it has got the mastery over the Heart, it follows from hence that this Passion is a grand Obstruction to Virtue, and by consequence, that one of our chief Duties is to keep it under. So that unless People can persuade themselves there is no necessity of being virtuous, or observing the Precepts of Religion, it must be granted that Chastity is absolutely necessary.

2. I add, this Virtue is so necessary, that there is no knowing how to love God, or to serve him without it. We are all bound to serve God, to pray to him, to give him Thanks, these being Duties all that have not renounc'd Religion readily agree to be of absolute Necessity. But bodily Pleasures are a Hindrance to the Performance of them; they extinguish Devotion, the Love of
God,

God, and the Fervor of Prayer. To serve God and pray to him as we ought, we must be sure to do it with Sincerity, Love, and Delight. But it is impossible to take delight in the spiritual Exercises of Devotion, whilst a Man is possessed with a Love of carnal Pleasures. The more devout any one is, the more nearly he is touched with the Love of God, and the more he has tasted of spiritual Pleasures, those ravishing Delights which are to be found in Communion with God, the more is he affected with a hope of the Heavenly Glory; and the more indifferent he is towards sensual Pleasures, the greater disgust he has of them. On the contrary, the more addicted one is to the Pleasures of Sense, the more does he seek after them; and the less relish he has for spiritual Pleasures, the less disposed he is for the Exercises of Devotion. For this I refer my self to my Readers own Consciences, and what they feel in themselves, whether Whenever they begin to love the World passionately and immoderately, the Love of God doth not thenceforward decline in them? And yet what an unpardonable Affront is it to the holy and glorious God, the God who would make us happy, and give himself to us, to prefer vain, brutish, and transient Pleasures before him?

3. It appears likewise that Chastity is of absolute Necessity, that we may attain to that Salvation and Happiness which Religion aims at. Such is the nature of the Heavenly Felicity, that without being chaste, there is no possibility of seeking after it, relishing it, or possessing it. But I forbear to insist upon this at present, designing it for the Subject of one of the following Chapters.

I presume I have said enough to shew that the Nature of Chastity itself, and the Relation it has to our other Duties, call loudly upon us to cultivate this Virtue, as we esteem it necessary to be

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Religious, and to use our Endeavours for obtaining another sort of Happiness than what our carnal Passions can furnish us with, during the short Stage of this Life.

II. What I next take notice of in this Virtue is its Beauty. St. Paul teaches this when he says, that *by this we keep our Vessel in Sanctification and Honour*, 1. Thes. iv. 4. By which Words he represents Chastity as fair, honourable, comely, and which makes an essential part of the Holiness to which we are called; whilst Impurity is in the mean time infamous and the Turpitude of it apparent by the very Light of Reason. But Chastity is most worthy of a Man, and does honour to and perfects his Nature, and disengages him from the Slavery of the Body and of Sense. A fondness for Pleasures is unbecoming one who has a spiritual and immortal Soul. Sensuality is a dull Passion, and debases the Soul, stupifies and renders it a Slave to the Body, and the more a Man is given to this Passion, the nearer he approaches to a Beast; as on the other hand, the greater Stranger he is to it, the more does he advance his Nature, and the more Care he takes of his Soul. But now if Chastity be worthy of a Man, much more lovely and more honourable is it in a Christian, who is devoted to God, and called to Holiness and Glory, and whose principal Character should be to have spiritual Inclinations,

† Col. 3.

1, 2.

|| Rom. 8.
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* St. Lu.

20. 35, 36.

† *to seek the things that are above, and not those which are upon the Earth*, and in short, to be a || spiritual and not a carnal Man. Upon this account it is that Chastity has been called an Angelick Virtue, because by it we resemble the Angels, and the state to which the blessed shall be advanced in the World to come; when, as our Saviour Christ says, * *they shall be like those pure and glorious Spirits the Inhabitants of Heaven.*

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III. In the last place I mentioned the Easiness that is to be met with in the Practice of Chastity. Virtue always brings its own Reward with it, by reason of the Composure of Mind and the Peace of Conscience with which it is accompanied. This is the certain Effect of it, that by purifying the Soul it renders it also quiet and easy. St. Peter has declared of *fleshly Lusts* that they * *war against the Soul*. And it is obvious to observe * St. Peter 2. 11. that Impurity raises in it Fear, Trouble, and Remorse; but Chastity fills it with a settled Tranquillity and Peace. By denying himself the Entertainments which the Flesh is wont to promise, a Man procures to himself infinite Joys; and by how much the stronger the Assaults of his Passion are, so much the more Pleasure does he find in Resisting them. An inward Satisfaction follows close upon a Victory over Temptations, a Man being always well pleased to come off Conqueror; but it must be confessed that he tastes most of this Peace and Satisfaction in resisting those Temptations which invite by Pleasure. The more the Sacrifice costs, the more acceptable it is concluded to be with God. If herein a Man offer Violence to himself, he finds himself abundantly recompenced, and enjoys a Satisfaction which infinitely surpasses whatever could be had in following a shameful Inclination. And here again I refer my self to the Experience every one may have had, and I beg of those who shall read this to declare, whether when they have got the Mastery over a Temptation, have turned away their Eyes from an alluring Object, and refused in any respect to gratify their Senses, they have not presently perceived an inward Peace and secret Satisfaction filling them with Consolation and Joy. With what sort of Comfort is the Soul then filled when it has reduced the Body to that condition, that its Temptations

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tions have lost their force, and there is no more fear of the Revolt of Sense, and the Assaults of this dangerous Passion ! Then it enjoys a most delightful Calm, is delivered from a thousand Dangers, and freely performs the Functions of the spiritual Life. And moreover in this state of Peace and Purity, the God of Purity and of Peace communicates himself, in a most intimate and most comfortable manner.

C H A P. II.

The Second Motive, The Divine Will.

THE Second Motive to this Virtue is the Will and Command of Almighty God. There is no room for doubting whether God would have all be chaste. We have already seen that he has declared his Mind most fully in his holy Word, and that there is no particular Sin oftener forbidden in the New Testament than Uncleanness. I shall mention in this place only those Words of St. Paul, 1 Thes. iv. 3, 4. *This is the Will of God, even your Sanctification, that ye should abstain from Fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his Vessel in Sanctification and Honour.* As he had also said before, v. 2. *Ye know what Commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.* Which Words taken together intimate Chastity to be one of the principal Commands of the Gospel, and an indispensable Duty which God requires to be observed by all. Whereto may be added also the Promises made to those who are chaste, the Punishments denounced against the Impure, and the several Judgments which have been executed upon them from

from time to time. A sufficient Proof of its being the Will of God that we live in Chastity.

And of what force ought this single Motive to be, That it is the Will of God? We are undoubtedly all nearly concerned to submit to whatsoever he enjoins. He has a sovereign Authority over us, and we cannot without great Offence and Injustice refuse to obey him. How prevalent soever our own Inclination be towards any thing, whenever it appears that God has forbidden it, a Fear of displeasing him must over-rule all other Considerations; and we must be sure to obey him even in the most difficult cases; it being unquestionable that he has a Right to demand of us the Sacrifice of whatsoever we love best, and even of our own Lives. How much more should we offer up to the Respect and Love due to Him, those shameful Passions which are not only displeasing to his Divine Majesty, but do ourselves an infinite Mischief.

That we may the better apprehend how powerful an Argument this is, let it be considered, that it is not only out of Duty and Reverence to Almighty God, we stand obliged to pay an entire Submission to his most holy Will, but it is what our own Interest also claims of us. This Will of God is *Good*, † as *St. Paul* speaks, it is for our † *Rom.* Profit and Advantage, and enjoins us nothing ^{12. 2.} but what is for our own Benefit. Can any one imagine that God would command such things as seem grievous to us, that he would forbid what we are apt to take delight in, and would impose such Duties as offer Violence to the Flesh, without just reason for it, and meerly that he may shew his Authority in tormenting us? This would be an abominable Misrepresentation of a God who is all Love and Goodness. And in truth he does it only because our Welfare requires that we

be used in this manner. He acts only as a tender and wise Father, who withholds from his Children such things as would be hurtful to them, and who never crosses them, but when it may conduce to make them wise and virtuous. We cannot satisfy our Passions, and take up with Creature-Enjoyments, without great Wrong and Ruine to ourselves. This were the way to involve ourselves in manifold Evils here in this Life, to set Almighty God at enmity with us, to leave us no hope of any greater Happiness than what the things of this World afford, and so wholly to sensualize our Souls as to put them out of a capacity of seeking after the everlasting Treasures of the other Life. And we have therefore abundant cause to adore the infinite goodness of our gracious God, who has condescended to direct us how we may effectually prevent our own Destruction. Wherefore we should readily and cheerfully submit ourselves to this Will of our Lord, so just in itself, and so highly for our Advantage, should silence all the Murmurings of the Flesh, and take delight in fulfilling those holy Laws whose great design is to conduct us to God, to imprint his Image upon us, and render us like him, and to prepare us by this means for the Enjoyment of the most consummate Felicity.

C H A P. III.

The Third Motive, The Presence of God.

THE Presence of God is likewise a great Motive to Chastity; which as it is of singular efficacy for withdrawing from all sort of Wickedness, so has it a particular Influence whereby to render us pure. And it is certain People would not give them-

themselves, as they do, to Sensuality, if they would seriously remind themselves, that they are continually in the sight of the Most High.

This is a Sin of which Mankind are usually ashamed, and this Shame has such Power with them, that there are few who can bring themselves to such a degree of Brutishness, as to conquer it, and lay it wholly aside. The Unclean study to hide themselves from the Presence of Men. And even the Suspicion or Fear of being seen will put a stop to their Intrigues, and cool their hottest Passion. There are many in the World who if they were convinced that all the Wickedness their impure Passions had put them upon were known, and that the shameful Excesses of their Thoughts and Desires were any way discovered, would wish to buy it off, if it were possible, with all they are worth; nor would they know how to live in Society, nor would have the Confidence to appear abroad, but would be covered with Confusion, and would choose rather to betake themselves to some foreign Country, where their Extravagances were never heard of. How then does it come to pass that the Fear of God does not deter Men from this Sin? How dare they commit it in the sight of a most holy and most just God, who *† is not far from every one of us,* *† Act. 17.* but beholds every thing we do, or think, and *27.* to whom Uncleanness is infinitely more odious than it is to Men? Or how can they be easy when they are conscious to themselves of having abandoned themselves to infamous Actions or Desires? Must not every one acknowledge it a most outrageous Provocation of Almighty God, to have less regard for his Divine Presence, than for that of a Man, or even of a Child? They are ashamed and reserved before Men; and is it not intolerable that when Men are not in the way, and they are

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only in the Presence of the Almighty, this Shame should immediately vanish? To this purpose speaks the Son of Syrach, Ecclus. xxiii. 18, 19. *A Man that breaketh Wedlock, the Lustful and Adulterer, saith thus in his heart, Who seeth me? I am compassed about with Darknes, the Walls cover me, and Nobody seeth me; what need I to fear? Such an one only feareth the Eyes of Men, and knoweth not that the Eyes of the Lord are ten thousand times brighter than the Sun, beholding all the ways of Men, and considering the most secret parts.*

It is of mighty use therefore to get this Thought well impressed upon our Minds, That God is everywhere, and takes notice of whatever we do. And Oh that we would often revolve it in our Minds, and would endeavour that it may in some sort be always present with us! Let us remember we are continually in the Presence of God, and moreover that it is a most Holy and most Just God in whose Presence we are; that being Holiness itself, he can bear no Impurity, and being perfectly Just and the Judge of the World, we have all the reason that can be to be afraid, whensoever we offend his pure and holy Eyes by any Pollution. It was his own express Command to the *Jews*, Deut. xxiii. 14. *The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy Camp; therefore shall thy Camp be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.* And if God exacted even an outward Purity in the *Israelites* Camp, upon this Consideration, That he *was in the midst of them*; can it be conceived that he will suffer the Filth of Vice in *Christians*, in the midst of whom he dwells in a more particular manner, than ever he did among the *Jews*? We should be sure therefore to render this Meditation familiar to us; and especially when we are attacked by a Temptation, should recollect that God's Eye is upon us; that he is near us, and observes and sees what

what we are doing at this very instant, and whether we have the Courage to resist the attraction of a brutish Lust for his sake; or whether we prefer an infamous Passion before the Reverence we owe to Him. This Reflexion well attended to would constrain us to cry out with *Joseph*, *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?*

This Motive will not only be of use for withdrawing from the Crime, but will oblige us to keep our Desires and the Motions of our Heart in good order. For if God be present to our Thoughts, if he be within us, and searches and examines us, and ** all things are naked and open to his Eyes*; it necessarily follows that whenever we give up our Hearts to Sensuality, God is witness of all the Vanity, Lasciviousness, and Immodesty that is in our Thoughts and Imagination. And how unagreeable an Object to the Eyes of God must a Heart be, where Lust reigns, and the Flames of a thousand corrupt Desires are perpetually blowing up? Did the impure Person weigh well with himself, that from the time this abominable Passion began first to take possession of him, God has beheld all that he has done or thought, and that he still is, and always will be with him, he would find it a very difficult matter not to be affrighted, And if Persons would often make these Reflexions, they would assuredly become much purer and chaster than they are.

Heb. 4.
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C H A P. IV.

*The Fourth Motive, The Life and Sufferings
of our Blessed Saviour.*

IT has been hitherto made sufficiently apparent that the Doctrine of our Lord *Christ Jesus* calls for Chastity, and that the Consideration hereof is a very powerful Engagement to apply ourselves to this Virtue. But it is not by his Doctrine alone that the Son of God was willing to dispose us to Chastity, but farther also by his Life and by his Sufferings. He came into the World to raise Mankind to a supernatural State of Happiness, and to wean them from the Earth. To this end he lived here below in an entire Freedom from the things of the World; and this was one reason of his Sufferings and his profound Humiliation.

I. To begin with our Saviour's Life, I need not say that it was completely pure, and that none could discover any the least or lightest Defilement in it. He ate, he drank, he was subject to our innocent Infirmities, he made use of indifferent things, but yet he lived in a total unacquaintedness with carnal Pleasures; hereby teaching plainly that all who profess themselves his Disciples and Followers are to be extremely moderate in this respect. We must propose our Lord to ourselves as a Patern for our Imitation, to tread in his Steps being the great Duty of a Christian; and must endeavour to resemble him as far as possibly we can, in all his Virtues, and more particularly in his Purity and Temperance, no less than in his Charity and his Zeal. † *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked.* And
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† Sr. Jo.
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can it be thought after this, that Christians are at liberty to lead a life wholly Carnal and Sensual? Or if they do, what manner of agreement is there betwixt them and their Head?

I am very sensible that in the Condition wherein we are in this World, we can never hope to be as pure as our Lord and Saviour was. Nor does he require it of us. Only he would have us imitate him as far as we are capable, and to this end to abstain from whatsoever he has forbidden us. Moreover I must note here, that the Difference which is betwixt our Lord Christ and us, is so far from Authorizing any to let loose the Reins to their Passions, that on the contrary it is even this Difference that obliges us all to be upon our guard. Our Lord being exempt from all Corruption had no need of being forewarned to arm himself against Temptations, whereas we are in great danger of suffering ourselves to be led aside by them, and by consequence this same Thought that we are liable to the Passions of the Flesh, should in a peculiar manner make us the more vigilant and circumspect, and should wean us the more effectually from all Sensuality.

II. The Sufferings of our Saviour teach us the same Lesson. The Cross of our Lord which makes up all the knowledg of a Christian, and ought to be the continual Object of our Meditation, is a most powerful Motive to Chastity. This Cross was the lowest degree of our Saviours Humiliation, and that which compleated his renunciation of the World. He not only tasted no carnal Pleasure, but he came to suffer whatever is most dolorous; and for this cause he ended his Life upon the Cross. And why wou'd he do this, if not in the first place to make Expiation for the Sins of Mankind, and next to teach them by his own Example, what he had before delivered and enjoined

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* St. Mat. 25 the Sum of his Doctrine; that * *they must deny themselves and take up their Cross?* This is the weighty Doctrine which Christ crucified presses upon all that profess to believe in him. The Cross of our Redeemer crucifies the Flesh, mortifies the Lusts, and causes the Christian to be crucified and dead to the World; as St. Paul teaches in his Epistle to the Galatians. And after this will it become us to search after the Pleasures and Delights of the World? Whosoever well understands the great Mystery of the Cross of Christ, cannot but know that he ought to bear his own, and to lead a mortified Life, and that without this he can never attain to eternal Glory. Our Lord Jesus went thither by the way of Sufferings; and let not us think to accompany him there by that of Delights. A Man cannot have the heart to give himself up to Pleasures, when he represents to himself Christ in the midst of his Sufferings.

† Rom. 6. 4. 6. A Christian † *that has been crucified and buried with Jesus Christ in his Death by Baptism, walketh thenceforward in newness of Life, he knows that the old man is crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve Sin.* He is very far from plunging himself in gross and sensual Pleasures, and giving up his Soul to the foolish and corrupt Delights of the Fleshly-minded. His Body is brought into Subjection, his Soul is united to his Saviour, and he can say with St. Paul, || *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* And thus it appears how the Life and Sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ are a Motive to Chastity.

|| Gal. 2.
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C H A P. V.

The Fifth Motive, The Glorious State we are in.

C H R I S T I A N S have another Motive to Chastity, arising from the Glory of their own Condition, and the happy State to which God has advanced them. They are Men formed after the Image of God, and resemble him in the excellency of their Nature, and the Difference that is between them and Beasts. So that their own Qualifications as Men engage them to govern themselves by the Principles of Reason and Virtue. But the Character of Christians may well put them upon labouring to bear this Image in a perfecter manner. They are called † to be *holy as God is holy*, † 1 S. Pet. 1. 16. and * *pure as He is pure*, and by consequence to abstain from all Pollution. St. Paul teaches this most manifestly, *Ephes. iv. 20, &c.* He makes the Image of God to consist chiefly in being free from Impurity. For having given an account of the Abominations of the Pagans, see how he applies himself to his Christian Readers. *Ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the Old-man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and that ye put on the New-man.* And again he delivers almost the very same Doctrine, *Col. iii. 9, 10.* In both which places the Apostle opposes the Image of God to the Impurities of the Heathens, evidently supposing that this Image is defaced in a Christian who is not pure.

Thus

Thus it appears that the Character we bear as Christians in a particular manner obliges us to live in Chastity ; this being the great Motive the Apostles insisted upon for banishing all the Pollutions of the Flesh from amongst the Disciples of our Lord ; || that they should not walk as other Gentiles did, who having the Understanding darkened, had given themselves over to Lasciviousness, to work all Unclean-
 || Eph. 4. 17, 18, 19. ness ; * should not live in the Lust of Concupiscence, as
 * 1 Thess. 4. 5. the Gentiles which know not God ; but † the time past
 † St. Pet. 4. 3. of their Life should suffice to have wrought the Will of the Gentiles, when they walked in Lasciviousness, and all sorts of Lusts, Debauchery, and Excess. Whence we see that as Impurity was next to Idolatry, the most prevailing and most abominable Sin of the Heathens, so on the other hand Chastity is one of the chief and principal Virtues of a Christian.

And it will highly become us therefore to be seriously and frequently reflecting upon it. God has granted us to be born in his Church, he has honoured us with a holy Calling, such as aims at preserving us from the Defilements of the World.
 † Our Bodies and our Souls are his, says St. Paul expressly, to dissuade from Impurity, and to instruct us that it would be a horrible Prophanation and Sacrilege to abandon ourselves to our shameful Passions of the Flesh. We are invited by our Religion to .∴ present our Bodies and Spirits a living Sacrifice to God, and glorify him with both these parts of us. But to offer to God a Body and Soul polluted and infected, would be to tender him an Abomination, much as if the Jews should have taken upon them to sacrifice a Dog or a Swine. The Scripture compares such as are enslaved to their carnal Lusts, to the nastiest and filthiest of Beasts. For if after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World, says St. Peter, 2 Ep. ii. 20, 21, 22, through the Knowledge of our
 Lord

* 1 Cor.
6. 20.

.∴ Rom.
12. 1. &
1 Cor. 6.
20.

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled and overcome, the latter end is worse with them then the beginning. For it had been better for them never to have known the way of Righteousness, then after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered to them. But it is happened to them according to the true Proverb, The Dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire. Which Comparison lets us see that the Sensualists dishonour their Christianity, and cast themselves down from the most glorious Condition Mankind is capable of attaining to, into a most contemptible State.

Many other excellent Observations might be made from the several Methods the Sacred Writers take for describing the glorious State of Christians. For instance we are told, that || *they have Commu-* || 1 St. Jo.
nion with God and with his Son Jesus Christ, and 1, & 2.
that they are in Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is in them.
Can a stricter or more honourable Union be imagined, than this? Or can any thing be conceived that requires greater Purity? So says St. John † If † *ibid.*
we walk in the Light we have Fellowship with God,
and with his Son Jesus Christ, but he who walks in
Darkness lyes if he says that he is within this Communi-
on. But now who walks more in Darkness than
the Impure, who indulge themselves in those very
Sins, which the Scripture calls * *the Works of Dark-* * Rom.
ness? St. Paul tells us likewise that Christians have 13. 12.
the Honour and Glory of being Members of Je-
sus Christ, and the Temples of the Holy Ghost;
which we have already seen are infinitely glorious
Names, as importing a most intimate Communion
with our Lord; but that without Chastity these
Relations cannot be preserv'd; but Impurity will
break the Links whereby we are fastened to our
Saviour; it defiles and dishonours our Body; it
drives

drives away the Spirit of God ; and by this Sin we lose all the Privileges of our Christianity.

Those August Titles, and so many others which the Scriptures ascribe to us, as of Saints, the Elect, the Children of God, the Redeemed of the Lord, New Men, &c. will by no means allow us to wallow in beastly Pleasures, and bring ourselves into bondage to infamous Passions ; but should on the contrary inspire us with Desires and Aims, worthy of the Grace which God has bestowed upon us, and the Glory whereof he would have us Partakers. This *St. Paul* affirms in the sixth and seventh Chapters of his second Epistle to the *Corinthians*. He speaks there of the glorious State whereto we are called, and the Advantages of the divine Covenant. He says *we are the Temple of the living God, that God dwells in the midst of us, that he will be our God and our Father, and will own us for his People and Children ;* and then concludes, *that we ought to separate ourselves from among the Wicked, and not to touch any unclean thing, but to cleanse ourselves from all Pollution both of Body and Spirit.* These are without doubt very charming and powerful Engagements to Chastity, and to look well to ourselves, and reverence the Characters of our divine Vocation, which are imprinted upon our Bodies, and upon our Souls.

These are not only Motives in point of Decency, but of Justice, and which lay upon us an indispensable Obligation to live chastly. Because God in raising us to so honourable a Condition, furnishes us with most effectual Means of guarding ourselves against impure Passions. He makes use of his Gospel ; he sets before our Eyes the strongest Arguments ; he fortifies us by his Spirit ; he

† 1 S. Pet. 1. 3. † gives us according to his Divine Power, all things that pertain to the Life of the Soul, and to Godliness. And let it be particularly remembred that the Use of the

the Sacraments tends to keep us off from Impurity, and that a Man cannot reflect upon these Sacred Ordinances, which it has pleased our Lord to establish in his Church, but he will immediately perceive what an Obligation they lay upon us to be pure. The Use of them should sanctify our Bodies, inasmuch as these same Bodies, our Hands our Mouths are the Vessels which receive these holy Signs; and who will say these Vessels ought not to be kept pure? The Sacraments are of the number of holy things, which are not at all for Dogs and Swine. By Baptism we have been consecrated to our Lord, God has set his Seal upon us, and we have made a solemn Vow before him, to renounce the World, and the Flesh with its Desires. And in Communicating in the holy Eucharist, we repeat this Vow, and engage ourselves anew to refrain from Sin. So that Christians who live not chastly, despise the Glory of their own Estate, tread under foot their singular Advantages, violate their Engagements, and leave themselves entirely inexcusable.

I shall beg leave farther to add one Reflection upon the difference of the Times we live in from those of former Ages. Men have been known to be chaste when they had not such Advantages for it as we enjoy. *St. Chrysostom* * presses this Consideration; when speaking of the Chastity of *Joseph*, and that of *Job*, he proclaims it admirable, considering the Time in which they lived. He remarks that they lived before our Saviour's Incarnation, and had never heard the Voice of *St. Paul* saying, *Know ye not that your Bodies are the Members of Jesus Christ?* nevertheless they believed that such as make a Profession of serving God ought to have the Command over their own Desires, and to pre-

serve themselves in Continence. He professes it a wonderful thing, to have seen such Examples of Chastity, at a time when they had not such strong Motives to this Virtue. And upon the whole, he concludes, That Christians are under a much greater Obligation to live in the Fear of God, and in Chastity, whereby to render themselves worthy of the Honour they have of being Members of *Jesus Christ*: And that it is not to be expressed, what an Indignity and Affront it is to the Mercy of God, to abandon themselves to Sensuality, after so signal an Honour done them. Lastly, This pious Father adds, That whensoever Evil Desires arise in the Mind, our Course must be to recall these Reflections, as being the proper Means of delivering from impure Temptations.

CH A P. VI.

The Sixth Motive, Death.

IF we find great Invitation to Chastity, from the State wherein we are in this World; our Future State presents us with other not less cogent Arguments. And upon this Account it is that I now design to touch upon the Estates through which we are to pass after this Life.

And the First thing that here presents itself to our Thoughts, is Death.

It has been a long time said, That the Meditation of Death, is most useful for repressing our Passions. But it has a particular Efficacy, in relation to the Duty I am treating of. Death being a Destruction of the Body, the Consideration of our Mortality should over-rule us in our Searches
after

after Bodily Pleasures, and should breed in us a disgust of them. If Persons were to live in this World for many Ages, they would seem more excusable in a passionate pursuit after the Pleasures of Sense, because so they might flatter themselves with the hopes of enjoying them for a long time; and yet the thought, that they must one day lose them, would be ready to trouble them in the height of all their Mirth. But when we call to mind, that we are to make but a short Stay in this World; that our Life is passing on, and whatsoever is the Object of our Passions passes together with it; that this Body of which we are so overfond, will speedily be laid in the Grave, and will become an Object of Horror, and a heap of Stench and Putrifaction; these mortifying Thoughts must doubtless tend to allay the Heat of our Lusts. And accordingly St. Peter tells us, ** our being in quality of Strangers and Pilgrims, obliges us to abstain from fleshly Lusts.* ^{1 S. Pet. 2. 11} Whosoever then has these Thoughts duly imprinted upon his Mind, that weighs with himself how soon it may fall out that he shall be no longer in this World, and, for ought he knows to the contrary, Death may seize him in the midst of his Pleasures, will find it necessary to abate of his Earnestness in seeking them, and will be far less influenced by their Allurements.

But withal, it is farther to be remembred, That the Death of a Sensualist must needs be very miserable; and the Separation whereby he is snatched from his Pleasures, cannot but be exceeding sad. For the more any one has lov'd his Pleasures, the greater Grief will it be to him to part with them; and the more he has sought after the Delights and Diversions of this Life, the more bitter will Death be to him. None is ever more afraid of Dying, or betrays more

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of

of Cowardise and Pusillanimity at the approach of his Latter End, than the Effeminate and Voluptuous. And the Condition of one who is in fear of Death, and dreads the thoughts of being taken hence, is so disconsolate, that no wise Man would venture to end his Days in this manner. Especially seeing, on the other hand, it is such a Happiness, to be able to leave the World without Regret, and to look Death undauntedly in the face, that one would think every one should earnestly labour after so desirable an End; to which yet nothing conduces more, than to accustom one's self, in time, to refrain from what he desires, and to fortifie his Soul and his Spirit, by a contempt of Sensual Pleasures.

To improve this Argument a little farther, it will be requisite briefly to consider the State where-to Men are reduced by Death, whether in relation to the Body, or to the Soul. The Body is laid in the Earth, a lifeless, senseless Carcass, incapable of any sort of Pleasure, and never to taste of it more. The Soul, indeed, does not perish with the Body, but subsists after Death, lives, and retains its power of Thought and Reflection. Thus much the Heathens confess'd, and every one may easily perceive, that will but attend to it; but Revelation puts it beyond all doubt. Now, in what Condition must a Soul be, which knows no other Pleasures but those of Sense, and which, during its continuance in the Body, was become wholly Sensual: In what Condition must such a Soul be, when it finds itself transported into a New World, where it can discover nothing of what it is so much in love with?

It is no sooner parted from the Body, but it immediately begins to bewail its own unhappiness, that it is lost, and undone, and is for ever separated from God, and its sovereign Good.

What

What is past, serves only to raise in it an afflicting Regret and Remorse ; and Futurity gives it no Expectation of any thing but what is highly Tormenting. It has no hope now of any manner of Comfort ; can no longer enjoy any of those Pleasures it had formerly been acquainted with, and is sadly unqualify'd to taste of those which alone could render it happy in the State whereinto it is now translated. Thus wretched and miserable is the poor Soul, deprived of all Comfort, and overwhelmed with Sorrow, upon a melancholick Prospect of its approaching Judgment. This is the woful Condition of the Sinner. But, oh, the unspeakable Happiness of a pure Soul ! What Consolation does it enjoy in the other Life ! How does it rejoyce, to think that it had taken care, in time, to disengage it self of all sensual Pleasures, and accustomed itself to seek after that Felicity which is only to be found in God ! Such a Soul can readily leave its Body, whenever it is called for, and will be sure to find itself much nearer to its God than ever it had been before, and will be all filled with Joy, and a sweet and delightful Expectation of a Resurrection, and Eternal Glory.

C H A P. VII.

The Seventh Motive, The Resurrection.

WE have now seen, that a Consideration of Death, and the Destruction of the Body, pleads hard with us to keep our selves pure. But it is a much more powerful Consideration, to think that this Body must be at length restored by a Resurrection. Our Bodies do not wholly
P 2 perish,

perish, and for ever ; but God will reanimate and enliven them. *Jesus-Christ* will come to rescue these Parts of us, for which he has shed his own Blood, from the Power of the Grave ; and to raise up these Temples, which he had consecrated to himself, but which had been destroyed by Death. But then it is to be noted, that if our Bodies must rise, it will not be that they may serve to the same Uses they had formerly, but to very

* *Cor. 15. 44.* different Purposes. * *They shall be raised, not to be then sensual, or natural Bodies, but to be spiritual Bodies ;* † *made like to our Blessed Saviour's Glorious Body ;* and they shall inhabit the other World, where will be nothing carnal, sensual or earthly.

† *Phil. 3. 21.*

This is a very glorious Hope, but which at the same time tends naturally to our Sanctification. This Glory whereto our Bodies are appointed, gives us to understand, that they were not made only for this short, transitory Life, but that our Gracious God has design'd them for a more Perfect and Eternal State. Wherefore we must by no means perswade ourselves, that they are to serve only for Pleasures, and that the Gratification of our sensual Desires is the End they were made for. There is a far more noble and more excellent Use to be made of them ; in order whereto, we must look upon ourselves as concerned to have such a Regard for them, that we may, as much as in us lies, even before Death seizes us, approach to that blessed State whereat we hope one day to arrive. Our Regeneration should beget in us a Change like that which our Resurrection will effect, that is to say, it should render us Spiritual Men, should take away, as much as may be, what is dull, earthy, and imperfect in us, and set us free from the Slavery of Lusts. Our Bodies are at present Members of the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the Temples of the *Holy Ghost* ; and this obliges us to treat them

them with Respect, and to preserve them in Purity. Which we shall find ourselves the more strongly obliged to do, if we consider that these Bodies are to be the Members and Temples of our Lord, in a far more perfect and glorious manner, at the Day of the Resurrection. How unspotted then ought the Purity of that Body to be, which is ordained to Immortality and Glory, above in Heaven?

It is upon this Consideration, that St. Paul dissuades Christians from Impurity, 1 Cor. vi. 13, 14. *The Body (says the Apostle) is not for Fornication, but for the Lord; and as God has raised up Jesus Christ, he will also raise us up by his own Power.* In the 3d Chapter of his Epistle to the Philippians, ver. 20, 21. he declares, *That the true Christians, who expect the Lord Jesus Christ from Heaven, to come and change their vile Body, that it may be fashioned like his glorious Body, demean themselves as Citizens of Heaven, and have quite different thoughts from those of carnal Men, who have their Belly for their God, and who mind earthly things.* He again urges the same Consideration, Rom. viii. 5, &c. assuring us, *That if we live the Life of Christ, and take care to mortifie our Lusts, our Bodies, which are subject to Death because of Sin, shall be raised by the power of the same Spirit of Christ, by which we had overcome our fleshy Desires in this World; and that they who shall have thus mortified the Works of the Body, and their Passions, shall live thenceforward a glorious and immortal Life: but they that had lived after the Flesh, shall have Misery and Eternal Death for their portion.* Whence the Apostle draws this Consequence; *That we are under an indispensable Obligation not to live after the Flesh, and not to employ the Members of our Body to Uncleaness and to Sin, but to consecrate them to Holiness and Righteousness.*

How dreadful then will be the Resurrection of those, who instead of ordering their Conversation aright, according to the Laws and the Spirit of Christ, shall have chosen to plunge themselves in Uncleaness? They shall indeed arise, but, as the Prophet *Daniel* speaks, *Dan. xii. 2. to Shame and everlasting Contempt.* This Shame will be the Inheritance of those who shall have made their Bodies Vessels to Dishonour, Instruments of a brutish Sensuality, and Receptacles of Filth and Impurity. The Voluptuous are Slaves to their Bodies, and do all for their sakes, and think to procure them the greatest Good, and most delightful Satisfaction. But in reality, they dishonour and destroy them, they expose them to Eternal Misery and Reproach, and, in short, prepare them for Hell. And so they become Murderers of their Bodies, as well as their Souls. Whereas those who, in obedience to the Precepts of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, keep the Body pure, treating it with some rigour, and bringing its Appetites into subjection; these are the true Lovers of their Bodies; these promote their real Welfare, and do them all the Honour that is in their power: This being the only way of attaining to the Resurrection of the Just, and securing an Interest in those Joys and Pleasures, which shall be reserved in the Life to come, for such as shall not have suffered themselves to be enslaved by the Lusts and Vanities of This.

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

The Eighth Motive, The Last Judgment.

AFTER the Resurrection, all Mankind shall appear before the Tribunal of God to be judged for what they had done in the Body, to give an account of their past Conversation, and to receive according to the tenor of it, whether well or ill. At whichtime the Impure shall meet with a most severe Judgment.

There is no question to be made, but all Men whatsoever, the very Heathens not excepted, must be judged. St. Paul says of these, *Rom. ii. 12, 13, 14.* that they shall be judged by the Law of Nature. The same Apostle likewise teaches us † that Impurity is one of those Sins they will be to account for. † *Rom. i. 24, &c.* St. Peter declares also, 1 St. Pet. iii. 3, 4, 5. that the Gentiles who walked in *Lasciviousness*, and all excess of Riot, shall give an account to him who will come to judge the Quick and the Dead. And if the Heathens who had not any other than the dim Light of Nature to guide them shall be thus judged, what a heavy Doom must those Christians expect, who shall have violated both the Laws of Nature, and those of the Gospel too, shall have despised so much Light, so many Arguments, such peculiar Assistances, as shall have been vouchsafed them in order to Purity, and shall have abandoned themselves to lustful and disorderly Passions? These, we know, are in a particular manner threatned with the Judgment of God. So says the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, ch. xiii. 4. *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.* Nothing can be more expresse than this. At another time St. Paul affirms, that *We shall all appear before*

the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive in the Body according to what he had done, whether good or bad, 2 Cor. v. 10. In which Words there is something that deserves to be more especially attended to by the Impure, namely that mention is there made of the Body. For whether these Words signify that Men shall be punished or rewarded in their own Body; or as some understand them, that God will render to Men according as they shall have done *in the Body*, that is to say, whilst they dwelt in the Body, during this Life, every one must needs see that one way or other the Body will contribute very much to our Happiness or Misery; and that therefore the use we shall have made of the Body will then prove of vast Importance. Whereby we may see what such are to expect, as shall have committed that Sin which is in a peculiar Sense stiled the Sin of the Body, and who shall at the Last Day appear before God with Bodies and Souls that had been polluted by Incontinence.

But what we read in the second Epistle of St. Peter, ch. ii. 4, &c. ought above all to be considered with great attention. This Apostle denounces the Judgment of God to those false Teachers whose chief Character was Licentiousness and Impurity; and proves the certainty of this Judgment by the Punishment of the wicked Angels, by that of the Inhabitants of the old World, and by the Destruction of those abominable Cities of *Sodom and Gomorrah*; and concludes from all these Examples, that Sinners, and most certainly the Impure, shall be punished at the last Day. *If God spared not the Angels which had sinned, if he spared not the old World, but brought a Flood upon the World of the Ungodly, if he condemned Sodom and Gomorrah, with an Overthrow, reducing them to Ashes, and making them an Example to those that should after live ungodly, and delivered just Lot*
vexed

vexed with the filthy Conversation of the Wicked; the Lord knoweth how to reserve the Unjust unto the Day of Judgment to be punished; but chiefly them that walk after the Flesh in the Lust of Uncleanness. These Words are directly levelled against Impurity. These Threatnings, though relating to all the Workers of Iniquity, have yet a particular respect to the Unclean, and such as follow the Lusts of the Flesh; and are supported by terrible Instances of the Wrath of Heaven upon such as give themselves over to the filthy Lusts of the Flesh. For we have shewn that it was chiefly this Sin which gave occasion for these dreadful Judgments of God; as is more sensibly evident in the Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. St. Jude alledges the same Example, and to the same purpose with St. Peter. *Sodom and Gomorrah and the Cities about them giving themselves over to Fornication, and going after strange Flesh, are set forth for an Example, suffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire, Ep. St. Jude 7.* And this he says to prove that the Lord will not suffer those to go unpunished, who defile the Flesh, and turn the Grace of God into Lasciviousness. These Considerations are of singular force; these Examples, and particularly that of Sodom, should make the Impure to tremble, and strike them with a Dread of their approaching Judgment.

There is one thing more to be observed in relation to this Sin, which is that it is very often committed in secret; but yet if God be obliged as Judge of the World to punish other Sins, he is more especially engaged to punish hidden Sins. The Crimes of Uncleanness are, as St. Paul speaks, *† Works of Darkness, and things committed in secret, † Ephes. 5.* but they shall however be brought to light, at that *11, 13.* Great Day which will make all manifest. These secret Sins and unknown to Men, will be the more certainly and more severely punished, because those who

who commit them, though in truth highly culpable, yet pass for innocent, and are not put to disgrace by them; whilst others who have not had Cunning enough to conceal their Crimes, or did not think fit to do it, but chose rather penitently to confess them, have suffered Reproach and Punishments in this Life. But it is more especially to be observed of Impurity, that many of those who conceal their Guilt, die without Repentance, and for this reason, because they have betaken themselves to Lying, and other wicked Courses, as I have shewn, whereby they lay themselves under a sort of Necessity of persevering in their Sin, and dying without either Confession or Reparation. Whence it comes to pass, that generally speaking, such as have sinned in secret, are in a far more dangerous State, than those whose Faults are most taken notice of, because these are in a better disposition to discharge their Conscience, and rise again after their Fall. They that judge themselves in this World shall not be judged in the other.

From what has been said it follows that the Unclean shall not escape the Judgment of God; and therefore the Prospect and Apprehension of this Judgment should make us all chaste. Oh how dreadful must the Approaching and the awful Appearance of the Great Day, which shall determine the eternal Fate of all Mankind, be to those who shall have lived in a State of Pollution! It is easy to guess what Distress and Anguish will then seize them, with what Confusion they will be covered; and what on the contrary will be the Confidence and Joy of all that shall have lived in this present World in Chastity and Temperance; waiting for the blessed Hope, and the glorious Appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

C H A P. IX.

The Ninth Motive, Hell-Torments.

FROM the Consideration of the Last most Dreadful Judgment, it is natural to pass on to what will follow it. And accordingly we are taught that after Mankind have been judged, *|| some shall go away into Life eternal, and the rest into ||* St. Mat. Everlasting Punishment. We have likewise already 20. 46. seen that these Punishments of the Life to come belong to the Impure. Our Lord speaking of Chastity, says it is better to mortify ourselves, and deny ourselves those things which are most agreeable to the Flesh, ** than to be cast into Hell-Fire, ** St. Mar. where the Worm dies not, and the Fire is not quenched. 9. 43. 44. St. John declares, † that the Impure, Fornicators, and † Rev. Abominable, shall have their Portion in the Lake that 21. 8. burns with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death. Well then may we believe that the Punishments of the other World will be exceedingly severe, when the Holy Spirit sets before us so terrible a Draught of them, when he speaks of Fire, and Brimstone, and Hell, and the Worm that never dies, and the Fire that is never to be extinguished. We may judge also of the Severity of the Punishments reserved for the Impure, by the weight of those temporal Judgments that God has upon certain occasions inflicted upon the Lustful and Licentious. But above all the Example of Sodom is most remarkable; so that we cannot call to mind this lewd People consumed by Fire from Heaven, without observing what an Abhorrence the

the Almighty has of Impurity, and how insupportable the Punishment of this Sin will be.

No doubt it will be pleaded that God did not so terribly destroy this People for the Sins of Fornication and Adultery, but for those other more intolerable Abominations and Impieties that reigned amongst them. And I grant it. But then it is to be remembered that not only this People fell into these dreadful Excesses by means of the other Sins of the Flesh, and so it was Incontinence that brought this Destruction upon them; but besides there is a difference to be made between the State of this People and that of Christians, inasmuch as if the Faults are not the same, neither are the Persons. For Men are not only more or less culpable according to the Flagitiousness of their Sins, but likewise, and perhaps not less, by the Estate, and more or less favourable Circumstances wherein they are set. By this Rule, which yet is most unquestionable, Fornication, Adultery, and all sort of Licentiousness is far more criminal in a Christian, who is instructed by the Gospel, and has before his Eyes the Doctrine and Example of his Saviour, who is so powerfully assisted in order to a Purity of Life, and has solemnly renounced the World, and all the inordinate Desires of the Flesh; Impurity, I say, is far more criminal in such an one, blessed with these inestimable Advantages, than were the Prostitutions of a Pagan buried in Darkness and Idolatry. To commit the Crimes of Impurity in the Church of Christ, is a much higher Provocation than those Abominations which were acted in Sodom. And upon this Difference between the Persons it was that our blessed Lord so peremptorily declared, that ** those who would not be reformed by his Preaching amongst them, should be more severely punished at the Day of Judgment than Sodom and Gomorrah.* Wherefore I make no difficulty to affirm that impure Christians, and more

* St. Mat
II. 24.

more particularly those that give themselves up to Dissoluteness and habitual Sensuality, will be more severely punished, than the Vilest and most excessively Wicked amongst the Heathens. The Torments of these latter will be less, and their Condition far easier to be born; and for this plain Reason, That their own Consciences will not so sharply rebuke them. This ought well to be considered. When we think of the Heathens, and in particular of this infamous *Sodom*, whose Dissoluteness was so intolerable; of these wicked Cities, whose Memory will be always execrable, and which perished in so dreadful a manner; of these People whose Crimes were so detestable; it seems as if these were the most heinous Sinners the World ever bare. But let us not deceive ourselves; the Condition of sinful and vicious Christians will be far more deplorable in the other World, than that of this People.

The Impure will be shut out of Heaven. Saint Paul professes, 1 Cor. vi. 10. That *they shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*. And we shall see in the next Chapter, that they cannot possibly be admitted into it; and that Impurity is an invincible Barr in their way to Eternal Salvation. What Despair will seize them, for having preferred transient and filthy Pleasures, to an Eternity of Happiness which they might have attained to, but from which they are now irrecoverably excluded, and all merely through their own fault? They shall have their portion with the Devil and his Angels, and shall roar and languish under the same Punishment with him, because they had chosen to be like this Unclean Spirit, and to do his Will.

But amongst the other Punishments they shall have executed upon them, the Shame wherewith they shall be covered deserves to be peculiarly attended

* Ecclef.

12. 14.

† 1 Cor.

4. 5.

|| Rom.

2. 16.

tended to. They will find themselves exposed, by reason of these dreadful Sins, to eternal Reproach before both God and Man. It is most certain, that in this Great Day, when * *God will bring every work to Judgment, together with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil ; † and will bring to light the hidden things of Darknes, and will make manifest the counsels of the Heart, || and in the day when God shall judge the secrets of Men by Jesus Christ ;* the Crime and the Shame of these Transgressors shall be made publick. It has moreover been thought, that in the other Life, the Misery and the Number of the Reprobate will be known to the Angels and to Men ; who, as they shall observe the faithful Worshippers of our Lord, so will they those that shall have forsaken him. Moreover, according as the Justice and Goodness of God will be adorable in the manner of his manifesting and crowning the Innocence of the Righteous ; so will they be proportionably in the Punishment of secret Sins, such as the Sins of the Flesh for the most part are.

As an Instance of this, let us call to mind, that there are divers Persons whose lustful manner of Life is not at all taken notice of, nor can they be charged with any known Immorality, and so they pass under a very different Character from what they justly deserve ; these might be expected to be found amongst the Saints in Glory, but will not be found there, because of that Impurity wherein they had indulged themselves in secret, and which had prevented their admission into Heaven. The Damned in Hell will be greatly surprized, to behold such amongst themselves as had been accounted Good Men, whose Virtue the Wicked themselves revered, and whose Probity, perhaps whose Holiness and Piety, was had in reputation. Now if any enquire how these

these came to be punished in the company of the Profane, Blasphemers, Murderers, &c. he will find these Men of whom he had so high an opinion, to have been given to Lasciviousness. He will find his Neighbour whom he took to be so eminently Religious, had privately addicted himself to brutish Passions, and was really a wretched Instance of Impurity, and so much the more culpable in the sight of God, because he had imposed upon Men, by adding Hypocrisie to his love of Vice, and under an appearance of Vertue had covered a wanton Heart, and gratified his own infamous and sensual Desires. Thus will Misery and Shame be the Reward of those who suffer themselves to be enslaved to this Passion.

I shall not go on to enlarge upon their doleful Condition, but shall rather observe of what singular Influence a Fear of Hell is, for obliging to Chastity. And here the Goodness of God is admirable, in offering such powerful Motives for reclaiming from Sin; inasmuch as the more intolerable these Torments are, the more ought they to affright us, and to make us Wise and Continent. So rare a Preservative are they from Carnal Passions, so effectual a Barr to the Allurements of Lust, and so proper a Means of defeating the Charms of Temptations. Let us then compare the false Delights they offer, with the intolerable Tortures that attend them; let us compare those shameful and unprofitable Gratifications which are but for a moment, with the eternal Vengeance of the Life to come, let us consider, that the Pleasure passes away, but the Pain will never be over, and then see to what purpose all these Pleasures serve, for which Men have had so great a fondness, and to which they have sacrificed all they had, and even their own Consciences with it; or whether they will administer any manner of Consolation.

solation. This may in a good measure be judged of, by what befalls us in this World. Every one sees, that one only Sickness, one single Pain, if in any measure of extremity, takes away our relish of the Pleasures of this Life, and even causes an Aversion to them. What opinion then will Persons have of these Pleasures, what regard for them, when they shall be tormented in Hell? especially when they shall reflect, that they were these same unhappy Pleasures, that by their deceitful Enticements and poisoned Baits, drew them into that deplorable state of Perdition.

Wherefore, let all those who without any Fear of God, or Reverence for their Baptismal Covenant, pollute themselves with the filthy Sins of Lasciviousness, weigh this well with themselves: Let them berthink themselves what is like to become of them, and whither their infamous Passion will carry them. They shall one day pay excessively dear for the brutish Dalliances with which they had pleased themselves, unless they take care to amend their Lives in time, and make due Reparation for their Sins. Those that burn with the impure flames of Lust, shall one day burn likewise in those of Hell. Let none of us deceive themselves; this Sin leads directly to the dark Abyss. *God will judge Whoremongers and Adulterers.* The Scripture says not this in vain; and since it speaks so positively and so affectingly of these Torments, they must necessarily be both Terrible and Inevitable. I beseech those especially who are in danger of being drawn into this so pernicious a Passion, and especially the Younger Sort, to weigh this Argument well with themselves; that they may be afraid of following so destructive an Inclination, and may prevent that dreadful Vengeance which will be the Portion of all who
** who walk in the ways of their own Hearts, and the*
figh

sight of their own eyes, and who remember not their Creator in the days of their Youth. Chastity is an excellent Security against all these Evils; and he that whilst Young takes care to acquire and preserve it, saves himself a great deal of Remorse, and lays a good foundation for a solid Happiness throughout the whole course of this Life, and for all Eternity.

C H A P. X.

The Tenth Motive, The Happiness of the Life to come.

THE Last Motive to Chastity, is taken from the Happy State wherein the Blessed shall live in the World to come, the unconceivable Felicity whereto they will be advanced in Heaven. I shall not stand to describe the Greatness of this Felicity, either with respect to its Nature, or to its Duration. I suppose it to be the happiest State a Creature can be raised to; and that all we can conceive most desirable in this World, is nothing, in comparison of the Heavenly Treasures, those most inestimable Advantages, and those unspeakable Satisfactions, whereof the glorified Saints shall be possessed in the other Life.

This being supposed, I say, the Expectation of this Felicity, is a very considerable Engagement to Chastity. * *He that has this Hope in him, purifies* * 1 St. Joh, himself. † *Having therefore these Promises, let us* 3. 3. *cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit.* † 2 Cor, St. Peter, 1 Ep. i. 3. attributes such Efficacy to 7. 1. these great and precious Promises, that he says they are able to raise us above ourselves, and to make us

Q Partakers

Partakers of the Divine Nature, by escaping the Corruption which is in the World through Lust. And indeed, what ought not Persons to attempt, that they may obtain an Interest in the Glory and Felicity of the other Life? Or, what can one that understands the Excellency of that Blessed State, ever set in competition with it? All the Pleasures, all the Charms of Sense, vanish, upon the appearance of these inestimable Promises. Men are touched with Pleasure; and to the Carnally-minded it seems a very hard Lesson, and an unreasonable Task, to require that they deny themselves the Pleasures of Sense. Yet these Pleasures are nevertheless of no great value; they are shameful, they are often-times hurtful, but always are imperfect, vain and transitory. And were they more solid, and more lasting than they are, it were the height of Folly to prefer them before the supreme Happiness of a Future Life: And indeed, not to have a very mean esteem of them, and be ready to part with them whensoever they interfere with our hopes of That. It has been formerly observ'd, and is still to be seen every day, That People are not afraid to deprive themselves of these sort of Pleasures, and to lead a painful and uneasy Life. St. Paul affirms, That those who were to *strive for the Mastery* in the Olympick Games, were *temperate in all things*, 1 Cor. ix. 25. What Plato writes upon this Subject, is proper also to be mention'd in this Place*. This Philosopher, speaking of the Laws which were to be enacted against Impurity and Debauchery, says, Though this Abstinence from Pleasures seems very difficult, yet it is not impossible to be effected: And for the Proof of his Assertion, he instances in certain Wrestlers, who,

* Plat. de Legib. l. 8.

to perform their Exercises the more Manfully, abstained from these sort of Pleasures throughout their whole Lives. If the Heathens had these Sentiments, and could attain to such Continency, what ought not Christians to do, in order to the Heavenly Glory? *If these Wrestlers did so much to gain a corruptible Crown, we should be ready to do much more for an incorruptible,* as St. Paul argues.

It is true, if a Man could be received into Heaven, whatsoever Course he takes here, whether he renounce his Lusts, or study to attend and serve them, there would then be no such absolute necessity of Chastity. But if we would know for whom these infinite Rewards are reserved, and who they are that shall be thought worthy to partake of the Glories of the other State, the Scripture plainly teaches them not to be such as are given to Lasciviousness; for it excludes these out of Heaven. St. Paul professes * 1 Cor. 6. 10. *That these shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* And St. John says, † There shall in no wise enter into the heavenly Jerusalem, any thing that defileth, or worketh abomination. Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. † Rev. 21. 27.

But to come a little nearer to the Point: Why does God exclude the Impure out of Heaven? Shall we say barely, because it pleases Him to do it; and that He thinks it not fit to admit them, though there is nothing to hinder it, if He would? This Answer is by no means satisfactory. The Notion we have of God, as a Being infinitely Good, perfectly Wise, and superlatively Just, directs to think otherwise, and to argue with ourselves, That if God has established certain Laws, and enforced them by certain Punishments, it was because the Happiness of Mankind made it necessary such Laws should be imposed upon them, and because Punishments are the natural Consequents of the Violation of his Commands. We

can never be happy any other way, but by the Observance of these Laws ; and by the Breach of them, we make ourselves necessarily miserable. By doing what God enjoins, we fit ourselves, as becomes Reasonable Creatures, for the Possession of the Sovereign Good, which is God, and bring ourselves nearer to him ; but by Disobedience to his Divine Laws, we turn away from God and our supreme Felicity.

Let us therefore meditate and weigh well with ourselves what the Scripture constantly teaches ; namely, That * God will render to every one according to his doings : That † we shall receive in the other Life, according to the Good or Ill we shall have done here : That || each one shall reap in the other World, that which he shall have done in this : And that ‡ without Holiness, none shall see the Lord. All which Passages perhaps will naturally put us in mind, that our future Eternal State depends upon our Behaviour at present ; and there is such a natural and necessary Relation betwixt what we are now, and what we shall be hereafter, that without getting ourselves into a good Disposition in this Life, we never shall, never can be, happy in the other. And that since Chastity is a Disposition that God exacts of us, our Hope and Expectation of that Blessed State, must be a most powerful Motive to the Practice of this Virtue.

To the end we may enjoy the Heavenly Felicity, we must receive and stedfastly believe the Promises which are made to us by *Jesus Christ* ; and must search after it, desire it, and put a high value upon it. Because, Man being endued with Reason, no Good, how great soever, can make him happy, unless he seek it, and believe he shall find his Account in it. And whosoever therefore, instead of setting his Affections upon those Heavenly Treasures which the Gospel sets before him, places

places them rather upon the Earth, and its vain Delights, hereby incapacitates himself for aspiring after the Bliss and Glory of the other World ; and so much the more, because the Heavenly State, and the Pleasures of the Flesh, are of a quite different Nature. It is upon this Consideration our Blessed Saviour declares, That * *our Heart will necessarily be where our Treasure is*, and that † *we cannot serve two* * Mat. 6. *Masters.* As his Apostle St. John also affirms, That † *if any man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* † Ver. 24. As a Drunkard or Profligate Person, S. Joh. is unable to taste the Satisfaction a Wise Man finds in the Search and Knowledge of the Truth ; so he that minds nothing but his Sensual Delights, as knowing no other Pleasures, can never relish those Entertainments which are not only of a different, but quite opposite Nature, such as are Spiritual and Heavenly Pleasures.

If the Felicity we aim at were to be a Corporal Felicity, the Habits and Dispositions which are contracted by a Licentious course of Life, would be no impediment to the Possession of it ; and so a Love of Sensual Pleasures would be in some sort pardonable. But Christians are not to believe like those Infidels who place their Carnal Pleasures amongst the Blessings of Paradise. We have Hopes of another nature, and expect a Divine and Spiritual Paradise ; and are well assured, that after the Resurrection, the Pleasures of Sense shall be at an end. Our Lord himself has told us, That † *then People shall neither Marry, nor be given in Marriage, but shall be as the Angels of God.* † S. Luke 20. 35. And we have all therefore abundant reason to prepare ourselves for this State, to aspire after it, and to get as near it as we can. A Hope to be with God, to see Him as He is, to be with Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Angels, to be employed in Exercises wholly Spiritual and Heavenly, and in the

Contemplation of the marvellous Works of the Lord, such a Hope can never be well fixed in a Heart, where Corruption and a Love of Sensuality reign. This Hope calls for pure and virgin Hearts, chaste and innocent Souls ; and to this purpose may be applied what is said in a different sense, Rev. xiv. 4. *These who are not defiled with Women, but are Virgins, shall follow the Lamb where-soever he goeth, these were redeemed from among Men, to be the First-fruits to God and to the Lamb : These shall dwell in the Temple of God, and be Kings and Priests to all Eternity.*

These are the chief Motives to Chastity ; which, were they taken either from uncertain Conjectures, or Considerations of little Importance, it were more excusable not to be prevailed upon by them. But this is not the Case : For nothing can possibly be proposed that is more certain, or of greater consequence. There is nothing in the World more certain than these great Truths ; That we shall one day die ; That yet we shall not die like the Beasts, but have a Soul which dies not with the Body ; That there is to be another Life after this, when our Bodies shall be raised from Death, and we shall all be brought to Judgment : and lastly, That after this Judgment, we shall live eternally either in Misery or Glory. These are indisputable Truths, and they are likewise of the highest moment and concern to us. All other Considerations are of very little weight, and next to nothing, in respect of These.

Wherefore, seeing there is no acting like Rational Creatures, without giving way to the strongest Motives, those who are not prevailed upon by these which I have mention'd, though so pressing, and of such weighty importance, should be sure they have other Reasons and Motives of greater force to overbalance them. But
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what can these be? Or, how comes it about that Sensualists are so wedded to their Impurity, in spite of all that is urged to reclaim them from it? They can pretend but one reason for it, and that is, brutish Pleasure, such a gross and sensual Inclination as themselves are ashamed of. But is this a Temptation fit to be compared with those weighty and important Considerations, which are drawn from the Will of Almighty God, his Presence with us, the Life and Death of our Blessed Lord, the Honour of the Christian Name, our own Death, and all that is to follow after it? Are all these Arguments to be looked upon as of no force, and to be despised, and thrown aside? Is it the part of a Man, to shut his Eyes against all Means of Conviction, to hearken to nothing that can be said, but, for the Satisfaction of his Lusts, to run headlong upon certain and irretrievable Ruin? This is an Excess of Blindness that were hardly to be conceived, and whereof Mankind were not capable, if they would but seriously attend to the Motives they have to Chastity. It is most certain, People do not give themselves to Impurity, for any other cause, than that these Motives are not well impressed upon their Minds; the proper Means of Chastity being to think of them seriously and often.

SECTION III.

Of the Means to be used in order to *CHASTITY.*

CHAP. I.

*That there are Means of being Chast, and
that this Vertue is attainable by their Help.*

AFTER having in the preceding Section proposed the principal Motives to Chastity, I am in this to treat of the Means to be made use of in order to it.

And here I take it to be incumbent upon me, in the first place to prove, that it is not at all impossible to be Chast. I must not say that all these Doctrines of Purity are laudable and just, but without that it is difficult to reduce them to Practice, and Means must be found out for enabling Persons to observe them, this being above their Capacity, and a Task fitter for Angels than Men. This is the Libertines Plea whereby they seek to excuse their Disobedience to the Laws of the Gospel; but nothing can be said more idly, or more falsely; or more injuriously to God and the Christian Religion.

This one Consideration, That God enjoins Chastity, is an invincible Proof that People may attain to it. It is by no means to be imagined that
God

Sect. III. *That there are Means of being Chast.* 233

God is unjust, or will strictly and under pain of eternal Damnation command the Observation of such Duties as he knows to be utterly above our Power. No, he is too Good, too great a Lover of Equity to impose such Impossibilities upon his Servants. There are Means of performing what he enjoyns, sure Means of doing it, and the use of which is not very difficult. And as it is He who has ordered these Means, so has he engaged himself to second them with his Blessing, whensoever we heartily set ourselves to obey Him.

It is strange that any who call themselves Christians should make a question of this. We have seen that the very Heathens have believed Chastity to be a practicable Virtue. The Precepts of their Wisemen, and the Examples of Continence that occur in Ancient Histories suppose it. And shall Christians have so mean an Opinion of their Lord's Doctrine, and the Efficacy of his Grace, as to think that People cannot however live in Purity?

Yet it must be granted that this Duty is not alike easy to all sorts of Persons; and some find considerable Trouble in it. But so is it in all the other Duties of Morality. There are some who, whether from their natural Temper and Constitution, or from the bad Habits they have contracted, are violently pressed on to certain Passions, and must be at pains with themselves before they can refrain from them. For instance there are those whom an eager Temper and fulness of Heat, together with an ill Habit too long indulg'd, have render'd so prone to Anger, that they must be very diligent and watchful, and always upon their guard, or they will not be able to avoid it. Nevertheless it will ill become these to pretend this for their Excuse; for so there is no Sinner but would be able to vindicate himself. Let him but
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be thoroughly engaged before-hand in any Habit of Vice, or subject to any Passion to such or such a Degree, and then he may take his Liberty, and it will not only be to no purpose, but will be unfair to go about to oblige him to a Reformation, and to threaten or punish him if he refuse it.

I yield that divers are strongly pressed to Impurity. But in the first place it cannot be concluded from hence, that there are no Means of preserving themselves from this Passion. If they brought themselves into this Estate by their own Fault, and for want of using the Means that were afforded them in order to Chastity, this is no Evidence that these Means are not sufficient for their purpose. The Case is the same here, as if a Man had fallen into a mortal Fit of Sickness, by not using certain Preservatives or Remedies; which does not shew that he had no Means of Preventing this Sickness, but only that he did not make a right Use of them. I say, in the next place, That God has ordained a proper Means and Remedy for such, whereby to avoid the Excesses of the Flesh, which is Marriage, as *St. Paul* teaches, *1 Cor. vii.* But I add farther in relation to those who are already entangled in this dangerous Passion, and whose Return to Chastity appears very difficult, that they may yet recover themselves, and many have actually done it. It is true they will find it troublesome at first; but then they should remember that it is but reasonable for them to cross their own Inclinations, and bear with some Inconvenience, to preserve themselves from Destruction. And again, all this Trouble will grow less in time, and by the Use of these Means they will every day become easier, as I hope to shew very plainly.

I lay this down then as a Principle, that there are Means of being Chast; and that whosoever shall make the Trial, will quickly find the Benefit
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of them. As for those that will not use them, who will do nothing to help themselves, will not Pray, nor Fast, nor keep out of the way of Temptations, nor Watch over themselves, nor Cross themselves in any thing, which is the Case with most of the Unclean; these, I own, will never attain to Chastity, but then they have none but themselves to blame for it. It is their own Fault, and not any Defect in their Religion, that they are in this Condition: And their wilful Negligence will not hinder but that there may be sufficient Means of making the Practice of this Vertue not only Possible, but Easie.

C H A P. II.

*What is to be done, in order to Chastity;
and first, of Holy Exercises.*

THERE are two General Means of acquiring Chastity; namely, Holy Exercises, and Watchfulness against Temptations.

The Exercises of Piety and Devotion, are an excellent Preservative against Impurity, and most effectual Helps towards becoming Chast. By which I do not mean barely External and Corporal Exercises, such as are those of most Christians, which consist only in the Recital of some Prayers, the Reading some good Discourse, being present at Religious Assemblies, and attending the Publick Worship of God. Which Outward Acts and Duties of Religion are both useful and necessary, but yet cannot, without a great Mistake, be thought to be so of themselves, and that they are sufficient to gain a Man Acceptance with God.

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So far from this, that bare Outward Devotions do but set him at a greater distance from God, and defile the Conscience. Here therefore I mean, an Interior Devotion, such Acts of Piety as come from the Heart, and are accompanied with a sincere Desire and Endeavour to please God, and and attain to a real Purity. Without this Design, all a Man does will stand him in no stead.

There are Three Pious Exercises that are more especially useful, in order to the Virtue we are treating of; and they are, Prayer, Reading, and Meditation.

I. He that would be Chast, must Pray often; Prayer being a most effectual Remedy against Temptations to Impurity, as having a two-fold Use for Purifying the Heart. On the one hand, by Prayer, we obtain of God the Spirit of Purity, and Ability to withstand the Desires of the Flesh; and prevail with Him to assist us, and to preserve us from many Temptations. On the other hand, it is impossible that Application and Intercourse with God should not make us Pure. A Custom of speaking to Him who is Holiness itself, of discovering our Hearts to Him, and appearing in his Presence, will make us Wise and Circumspect. When a Man is about to present himself before the Lord, or when he goes out from his Divine Presence, he will not dare to allow himself in any Pollution, nor will be at that time susceptible of the Impressions of Sensuality: The Comfort he has found in the Exercise of Prayer, the Satisfaction so pure and solid which he enjoys at such a time, makes him less attentive to the shameful and transient Delights of Sin. Thus Prayer serves very much to Strengthen and Purifie the Soul.

Wherefore, so many of you as desire to live Chastly, present yourselves often before God, lift up your Hearts frequently to Him; put up to Him,

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at every turn, and with great earnestness, that Prayer of *David*, *Psal. li. 10. Create in me, O Lord, a clean Heart.* Let this be your first Thought when you awake in the Morning; intermix this Prayer with your Business; in the midst of your Work have such Ejaculations; and, though short, they will not fail of being highly beneficial. Do this when you find yourselves free and undisturb'd with evil Thoughts; and when these assault you, double your Prayers. Use the same Course at Night, before you betake yourselves to Rest; and again whensoever you lie awake: So will it become habitual to you to behave yourselves as in the Presence of God; your Souls will become Pure, and your Temptations will either keep at a distance, or at least will lose a great part of their Force.

But now if you would have your Prayers produce this happy Effect, you must Pray with Faith, and through *Jesus Christ* our Lord; and must be fully persuaded that God will grant the Favour you beg of Him, provided you do your part for obtaining it. This you must believe, and steadfastly too, because hereupon depends the Efficacy of your Prayers, *If any one lack Wisdom, (says St. James, ch. i. 6.) let him ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: but let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering.* And it is our Blessed Saviour's own Promise, *St. Matth. xxii. 22. All things whatsoever ye shall ask in Prayer, believing, ye shall receive.* That is a fruitless Prayer, which is offered up without this Faith, and at all adventures, and only by the Lips, without minding whether it is like to succeed or not.

And let not the faintness of your Desires discourage you: Cease not to make your Supplications to the Lord, how weak and defective soever they be, provided you be sincere in them. Offer them
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up with Confusion and a profound Humility, and beseech Him, in the Name of *Jesus Christ*, to pity your Infirmities. God is of himself so Good, and so ready to do Good to Mankind, that He never fails to answer those who invoke him with any measure of Sincerity. If you take this Course, you will quickly find the benefit of your Prayers, and will see cause to join returns of Thanks with them, and to bless God, when you feel the Bonds that had tied you so fast to the Flesh, and to your Senses, begin to fall off, and that the Allurements of Pleasures are nothing so strong as formerly: And thenceforward you will go on more easily, and be continually making new Improvements in Chastity.

II. The Second Pious Exercise I would recommend, is Reading. And this is advantageous upon divers Accounts. It employs Persons, and hereby is an useful Remedy against Evil Thoughts. It suggests Good Meditations, and affords such Reflections as we should not otherwise make; it excites Devotion; it takes off our Minds from Sensible things, and raises them up to Spiritual: In a word, it is a great help to Piety, supposing what is read to be Good and Instructive. But for this Purpose, of all Authors whatsoever, there is none comparable to the Holy Scriptures: For besides the Holiness of what is contained in these Sacred Volumes, the Authority of Almighty God speaking in them, challenges a particular Attention and Respect. The whole Tendency of the Scripture, is to make Persons Spiritual; and to this end, it proposes to them a great number of Precepts, Examples, and Motives excellently conducing to cleanse them from the Pollutions of the Flesh. *St. Chrysostom* * attributes so great Power

* Conc 3. de Lazaro.

to the Scripture, in respect to Chastity, that he says, A bare Sight, or Touching of the Gospel, is enough to drive away Evil Thoughts. Which doubtless he said, upon account of the Reverence and Fear that is apt to arise in the Mind, upon the appearance of this Divine Book.

To the Reading of the Word of God, that of other Books may be usefully added. And in chusing of these, I would advise every one to select those which he observes to affect him most, and to stick to them. When a Book has been read over, and the Reader finds himself improved by it, it should be read over again and again; for it is a great Mistake, to think, the best way of profiting by Books, to lie in reading a multitude of them; and they that are always passing from one Book to another, make ordinarily but small Improvements in Piety.

Wherefore, I wish those who find it necessary to take Pains that they may become Chast, would impose it as a constant Task upon themselves, to read something every Day, to set aside some certain Time for this, and especially that they would spend part of all their Days and Times of Devotion in this Employment. But I have one particular Direction to give concerning Reading, which is, that such as find in themselves an indisposition to this Exercise, would strive hard to overcome it. People are not always enclined to Reading; but I beg of them however not to forbear it: They would do well to offer violence to themselves in this Case; and they may assure themselves no Hurt can come of it, but very great Good may. If Reading serv'd only to employ the Mind, yet so it were worth the while. Sometimes a Reading begun without Design, and with some Unwillingness, serves to excite good Thoughts, and inspire

inspire the Mind with such Sentiments as it would not otherwise have had.

III. Meditation, is another very good Means of Purifying the Soul. It excites and recalls into the Mind divers good Reflections, prevents Temptations and Evil Thoughts; and whenever they intrude, it abates their Force. And if any one would know what is a proper Subject for his Meditation; I answer, There are very many, very proper and useful; and that in general, there is no Matter of Religion and Piety, which may not be revolved in our Minds to Advantage. It may be very useful also to meditate upon all that has been discoursed in this Treatise, upon both Uncleanneſs, and Chastity. But there are some particular Meditations that have a peculiar Virtue for dissuading from Pollution. Such is, the Consideration of God's Presence. And we should therefore habituate ourselves to think frequently of it, remembring and well weighing with ourselves, that we are always in His Sight. I wish Persons would often call to mind that great Truth, That God is near them; That he speaks to them, exhorts, encourages them, makes Promises, and denounces Threatnings; That he tries them, and says this and that to invite them to Purity. For all this he does to reclaim People from Sin. These Thoughts would fill them with a Religious Fear; and, considering themselves as before God, they would not dare to take the liberty of Defiling themselves. Of such mighty Influence is a Fear of God, and Reverence for his Presence. *It is by the Fear of the Lord, that Men depart from Evil, Prov. xvi. 6.*

Another proper Subject for Meditation, and a likely Means of making the Soul Chast, is the Life and Sufferings of our Saviour *Christ*. The Life of

our Saviour and his Cross, are a powerful Motive, not to seek our own Ease, and the Satisfaction of our Senses in this World.

Our Meditations may be also very profitably employed about the Ends of Mankind, their Death, Resurrection, Judgment, and Heaven, and Hell. These are Objects that should be always present to us, and have an excellent Tendency to keep us from Impurity. The Thoughts of Death, which puts an end to all our Delights here, and not only lays the Body in the Grave, but turns it into a Nest of Worms, must necessarily abate the Allurements of Sensual Pleasures. The Thoughts of the Resurrection, will force us to have a regard to our Bodies, and to preserve them Pure. Those of Judgment, will strike us with Dread and Terror. That of Hell, will shew the Temptations of Lust to be very dangerous, and put us upon trying all ways for avoiding them. And the Thoughts of Heaven, and its unconceivable Felicity, will put us upon renouncing most heartily those destructive and shameful Pleasures, the short enjoyment of which, would for ever shut us out from this incomparably Blessed State. In fine, The Consideration of that Eternity, which every day draws nearer, and wherein we know not how very soon we may be placed, swallows up our Thoughts in such a manner, that it will suffer us no longer to hearken to the Enticements of Vain Pleasures, but will cause us to look upon the Delights and the Advantages of this Life as nothing worth.

These are the chief Subjects of Meditation, which may serve for a Remedy against Impurity, and a Means of obtaining Chastity. I beg leave to add to what I have said, That by Meditation, I do not understand only, a continued Course of Attention for some time together, but such Meditations likewise as are very short, or rather are

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only good Reflections, and holy Thoughts. Men may allow more or less Time to Meditation, according to their present Circumstances, and the Leisure they have for it. But it is of necessity that some Time be set a-part for it; and that, to this Purpose, some Intermissions be contrived in the midst of our worldly Affairs, wherein the Soul being at liberty, and having recollected itself, may have leisure for, and seriously employ itself in these holy Thoughts, and so may considerably improve itself. Besides this, Persons should likewise accustom themselves frequently to reflect upon something that is good, in the midst of their worldly Employments, and often to recall into their minds such Thoughts as are useful for Purifying their Hearts. This may be done, without interrupting their own necessary Affairs and Occupations, and a habit of doing it may be easily acquired. And Labourers, and Artificers, and such others as have their Bodies ordinarily at work, have yet this advantage; that whilst thus employed, they have nothing that can hinder their entertaining themselves with good Thoughts.

To conclude this Chapter: It is of the highest Consequence to Chastity, that the Time which is not spent in Sleep at Night and whilst we are in Bed, be employed in Meditation. This should the rather be observed, because Persons are then more at liberty; and should therefore more especially be upon their guard, for fear of being surprized by evil Thoughts and Temptations,

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

Of the Care that is to be taken for avoiding Temptations.

WHatsoever the Effect of Holy Exercises be, for disposing Persons to Chastity, they must necessarily be accompanied with our own Care and Pains; And this is no more than All will infallibly apply themselves to, if they once sincerely set about these Exercises of Piety; it not being possible for a Man heartily to desire a thing, without being willing to take some Pains for obtaining it. And here therefore I am to shew, what course is to be taken for preserving the Soul and Body in Purity.

Our Endeavours then must be two-fold. For as there are two sorts of Remedies, either Preventive, which a Man uses for fear of being Sick, or Restorative, and which are designed for his Recovery after his Disease has seized him; so are there two different Methods to be pursued against Impurity, the one for Preventing Temptations, and the other when under them. I shall treat of the former of these in this Chapter and the two next.

I. One of the chief Means of Defence against Temptations to Impurity, is a Distrust of ourselves. This Distrust proceeds from an opinion of our own Weakness, and a fear of being surprized and ensnared by Temptations. Nor is there any one who has not too just reason to distrust himself. It were meer Folly to imagine, that People shall never be exposed to Temptations, or shall certainly be able to overcome them

if they be. When once any presume this of themselves, they are undone ; for thenceforward they are no more upon their guard, but grow negligent, and so a Temptation is sure to prevail against them : Whereas, did they distrust their own Strength, and had an humble opinion of themselves, they would not be able to sleep in security. Diffidence, makes Persons Wise, Vigilant, Circumspect, inspires them with Fear, and makes them avoid the Occasions of Falling. On the other side, it directs them to put their Trust in God alone, and to apply to Him for the Assistance they stand in need of : And if God be on their side, they will easily subdue their evil Desires.

But none have more reason to distrust themselves, than those who are enclinable to Impurity, and have often fallen into it, one way or other. These cannot attend too diligently to this Admonition. Though they seem to have their Passions allayed, they are not however to think themselves safe. Many have fallen, and lost the fruits of their first Attempts, by a false Confidence, and by believing too soon and too easily, that they had already got the Mastery over themselves. Having observed in themselves some beginnings of Chastity, some declension of the Heat of Lust, and having been some days, or for some time, without feeling the returns of their Passion, they thought they had already attained to Purity : whereas, had they tarried a while longer, they would have found themselves very much deceived ; there being nothing wanting but an Object or Temptation, and possibly a very light one, to reduce them to their former State. Lust is often-times like a Fire hid under Ashes, which breaks out again with great violence in an instant, and when it is thought entirely extinct. Wherefore,
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that such who are not well confirmed in Purity, may be benefited by this Advice, their State should be a State of continual Diffidence and Fear, but yet such as is accompanied with Hope and Courage. For it is absolutely necessary for them not to be out of heart.

II. This Distrust will produce Vigilance, which is a second Means of Defence against impure Temptations; and to which the Gospel invites. Our Blessed Lord himself often exhorts to watch; and the State we are in in this World obliges us to be incessantly upon our guard. And Watchfulness is especially necessary with respect to the Passion we are treating of; which is lively and quick, and though its Beginnings may seem weak, it makes a great Progress, and does great Mischief in a Moment. Let it but lie asleep for a small time, and it will beget great Falls. It was want of Vigilance made *David* sin; who fell because he did not watch over himself.

Now one of the principal Duties of Vigilance, and one of the greatest Advantages it brings, is the avoiding Temptations. The first and most certain Means of securing ourselves against Sin, is to keep off from whatever might probably betray us into it. He that being exposed to Temptation takes care to resist it, does well; but does it not without some Struggle and Danger. And it had been much safer to have avoided the Temptation and Conflict.

For avoiding Temptations they should be foreseen and taken notice of. It has been already shewn what are the Allurements to Uncleaness, and every ones business is to shun these Temptations and Occasions as much as possibly he can. I am sensible he cannot always escape them wholly, but in a good measure he may, and then he will be in far less Danger from them. For example,

He that desires to be Chast, must fly Idleness, and be always some way well employed ; he must beware of Intemperance, and live very soberly ; he must be very moderate in his Sleep, and in things permitted him ; must not seek too much the Conveniences of Life ; must avoid Luxury and any Diversions wherein is Excess. He must refrain from going to any Places where he may be like to hear or see any thing that may draw him aside ; and must not read any obscene or wanton Books. But above all things he must govern his Eyes with great care, and keep out of the Company of Persons whom he cannot look upon without Danger. He must never be familiar with them, either in his Actions or Discourse, nor use any Toying and Wantonness, but be Grave and Circumspect ; and in one word, must be upon his guard against whatever might occasion any Sensual Thoughts or Desires.

But that this Practice may have its wished Success, Two things are to be taken care of. First that Persons be very exact, and very scrupulous, as to every thing that leads to Impurity, and that they do not take too much Liberty, under any vain Pretences. Men impose upon themselves divers ways. Sometimes they think things to be inconsiderable ; wherein they deceive themselves, not remembring that little things are here of great consequence, and cannot be neglected without Damage to Chastity, as every one may have observed. Some things they look upon as innocent, and that there is no Evil or Danger in venturing upon them ; yet these same things have oftentimes been the Occasions of great Falls. It is easy to be deceived in point of Conversation. One looks upon another of the other Sex, and thinks there is nothing unlawful in this, and that here is nothing with respect to either of them but Esteem and Friend-

Friendship; perhaps Religion too had at first some concurrence towards the Kindnesses and Discourses that pass between them; yet by this means a Passion has insensibly taken hold of them. And the case is the same with many other matters that are thought innocent.

The other thing I would have observ'd is, that seeing Persons are not always expos'd to all the forementioned Temptations, and they have not all the same force upon all sorts of Persons, every one should make trial of himself to see by which he is in most danger of falling, which Objects make most Impression upon him, and upon what occasions he is most apt to be seized with sensual Thoughts. There are some who are very orderly by themselves, but when they go abroad, the diversity of Objects they meet with discomposes them, and they cannot be in Company without forgetting themselves. Such should be very wary, and live retired. There are others who when Sober are Wise and Chast, but who in their Cups or after a Feast are not able to contain themselves within the Bounds of Modesty. These are oblig'd upon this particular account, besides those other Reasons which engage Christians to live in Sobriety, to be constantly upon their guard against Intemperance. Others again there are, who cannot go into some Places, or see some Persons without being ensnared by some impure Passion. These should be sure always to avoid such Places and Persons. And in this case it may be requisite to break off these Conversations, in such a manner as may prevent our ever renewing them for the future. Thus must every one apply himself, to discover and avoid whatever may be like to kindle any ill Desires in him. But ah! how very different is the ordinary course of Mankind, who seek out, instead of shunning these Occasions! Many know

very well what it is that drives them on to Sin; they know they cannot frequent the Company of such or such Persons, without being subject to some unlawful Desires, and yet they frequent it. They have found by Experience that the reading of some Books are a Poison to them, and yet they will not forbear it. They know before-hand that Wine is apt to have an ill Effect upon them, and make them disorderly, and yet they will not keep themselves sober. When any thus put themselves in the way of a Temptation, and willingly cast themselves upon it, it is not in their power not to yield to it.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Care to be taken with respect to the Body.

THAT we may be safe from Temptations, our chief Care must be to watch over ourselves; the Cause and Original of Evil being in ourselves; as St. James witnesses, 1 St. Ja. i. 14. *Every one is tempted, when he is drawn aside of his own Lusts and enticed.* Occasions and Objects seduce us not but through our own Fault. Nor again, do Temptations come always from without; they often proceed from ourselves, without the Intervention of Objects. So that our chief Care is to be laid out upon ourselves, and this with respect either to our Bodies, or to our Souls. The Body being the principal Fountain of Impurity, Lusts are therefore called Bodily or Carnal; and St. Paul makes Chastity to consist in possessing the Body in Sanctification. And accordingly there is no preserving

ving Chastity, without governing the Body. And therefore my Business in this Chapter shall be to shew what is to be done in this respect.

I. My First Advice is concerning its Diet; and it calls for an especial Attention from all that find themselves inclined to Sensuality. Now here the Gospel directs two Duties, Sobriety and Fasting.

1. I have already shewn, when I was considering the Causes of Uncleanneſs, that Intemperance in Eating and Drinking is one of the chief Causes of this Sin; and that consequently all that would be chaste, must necessarily be sober. Sobriety allays the Heat of Passions, that have been raised by too great Abundance, and too great Activity of the Blood and animal Spirits. By this Virtue it is that People become accustomed to command their own Appetites, and put themselves in a condition to resist their other Passions. But when I say Persons must be Sober, I do not mean they must only forbear being Drunk, and abstain from Gluttony, and other Excess of Riot; they must farther beware of being dainty, and not seek after what pleases the Taste and Senses, but to Eat and Drink moderately, and to use themselves to the plainest Sort of Food.

2. And yet the Gospel proceeds farther, enjoining not only Abstemiousness, but Fasting. Which has always been look'd upon as an excellent Instrument of Mortification of the Flesh; and was accordingly both recommended and practised by the Prophets and the *Jews*, by our blessed Saviour, by his Apostles, by the Primitive Christians, and by the whole Church. Abstinence from Meat and Drink is certainly a Help to Chastity. But then I mean a rational Abstinence suited to everyone's present state and Need. It weakens the Body, and so is of great use for beating down the Passions.

Passions. Every one feels that he is better able to resist his inordinate Desires, when he has from time to time denied his Body, not only Superfluities, but moreover some part of what is Necessary. A Government of our Appetites is of absolute necessity in order to the Practice of this Virtue ; but when a Man will not endure to cross himself in this, he will find a great deal of Trouble in doing it in other things. In giving the Body always whatever it demands as necessary, it is easy to grant it what is superfluous, and after that even what is forbidden. It is natural to have the like Complaisance for the Body in other things likewise, as well as in what relates to Food ; and it is therefore needful to betake ourselves to Abstinence, if we would tame the Passions of the Flesh. If the Impure would make use of this Means, they would presently experiment the Advantage of it. But it is a great Unhappiness, that such vast Numbers entirely neglect it to that degree, that the greatest part have no Notion of this Duty, nor think that they ever ought to cross themselves in Meat or Drink, and sometimes totally to refrain from them. This is one of the Causes of Licentiousness, and in particular of Uncleanliness. Men will be wiser than God. Jesus Christ has taught us how to mortify ourselves, and accustom ourselves to deny the Flesh what it requires of us ; and he has not prescribed this without great Reason. His first Disciples were so sensible of this, that they constantly made it the Matter of their Practice. And it is a melancholick Consideration, That in our Days so few will be invited to imitate them in it.

II. Labour is another Means of promoting Chastity. And as we would not be drawn aside by impure Desires, it will extremely concern us to beware of Idleness. Too much Rest makes People wanton ; and it is too common for them that

that live without any Employment to be addicted to this Vice. But now Labour is an excellent Preservative against it. This brings down the Powers of the Body, and dries up the Springs of many Temptations. Besides that whilst Men are busied, vain Thoughts do not so easily creep into their Minds. Thus therefore should every one order himself, though always with regard to his own Condition and Circumstances. But generally those that have a strong Inclination to Sensuality, cannot do better than to employ themselves as far as they are able, even to Pains, Fatigue, and Weariness, without sparing the Body; and they will see this Passion will lose much of its Strength.

III. A Third Means is, Mortification as to what concerns the Body and the Senses, and comprehends in it two Duties.

The First Duty is to refuse the Body those things that are pleasing to it. I say this not only in relation to things forbidden, but I mean that Persons should mortify themselves in what is permitted, and above all in what they have the most desire for, as in Food, in certain Conveniences of Life, in Sleep, Cloaths, and lawful Pleasures. In which Cases the way to mortify oneself is by abstaining from these things, if not altogether, at least in part, so as not to use them too frequently, or take all the Liberty in them that might be without Sin, observing Moderation in the use of them, and never being too eagerly set upon them. I know not what more to say as to this Point, than that a Complaisance for the Desires of the Flesh, is the destruction of Virtue and Chastity. A cockered and pampered Body is a Receptacle of evil Thoughts; and it is therefore of the highest Consequence to regulate and mortify ourselves in this respect.

2. The other Duty of Mortification is sometimes to contradict our own Inclinations, and accustom ourselves to a painful and uneasy Life. But herein Care must be taken to keep exactly in the middle between the Superstition of such as believe the Practice of excessive, and oftentimes idle and ridiculous Austerities to be Meritorious, and the Indulgence of those who know not what it is to suffer any thing that is painful and afflicting, willingly, and for their Spiritual Advantage. There is no particular Rule to be prescribed in this Case, but each one must observe what suits with his Circumstances, his Strength, and the Need he has of Mortification. For the Necessity of Mortifying ourselves is much greater in some than in others, and all are not alike qualified for taking this Method with themselves. Some being of a weakly Constitution, may justly favour themselves; whilst Others whose Bodies are robust and healthy, must be less sparing of themselves. But whensoever any find themselves enclined to Lust, and a vicious Temper of Mind, it is then high time for them to betake themselves to this Course of Mortification, and make use of Fasting, Watching, and Labour; to Eat little, to take their Rest only when forced to it by Weariness, and when their tired Limbs require it; and not always to Sleep so long as Nature would direct. Yet care must be taken not to favour the Body for false Reasons, and under colour of Necessity, or that it is for their Health. Upon these Pretences Men often indulge themselves in many things that they might well enough be without. They will not shorten their Rest, nor take Pains, nor Fast, for fear of ruining their Health; when would they fairly examine into the matter, they would discover that they herein plainly deceive themselves. After all, it is always the safest course to provide for the most pressing

pressing Necessity. When the Soul is in danger, the Body is to be less favoured; it being far better that the Body suffer, than that the Soul be eternally ruined. But there is no need of this. God would not have us cruel to ourselves; and it is certain, that we may Mortifie, take Pains, and Fast without Murdering ourselves. Besides, it is observable, That such who lead a mortify'd and severe Life, enjoy better health, and live longer, than those who have a blind Complaisance for the Body.

Where is the Christian that makes any doubt of the Necessity of Mortification, after the Pattern St. Paul has left us of Fasting, who professes of himself, *1 Cor. ix. 27. I keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection.* And to prove here is meant such Mortification, as consists in abstinence from Pleasures, and a strict Temperance, it is to be noted, that the Apostle produces the Example of Wrestlers who observed great Continence, in relation both to their Food, and to their Pleasures, and abstained from many things that others allowed themselves. Thus much these words import; * *He that wrestles or fights, uses Abstinence, or Continence in all things.* And that Passage of Plato before cited, shews that this Continence of Wrestlers, may be extended to whatever I have been treating of: It was, to mortifie himself, as well as to promote the Propagation of the Gospel, that St. Paul chose to suffer Hunger, Thirst, Fasting, Watchings, Poverty, Heat, Cold, and divers other Inconveniences. If this great Apostle took this Course; Who will be so presumptuous as to question whether there be need of it? I conclude then, That it is a most effectual Means of securing us from the Infection of impure Temptations, if

* Πᾶς ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος πάντα ἐνεχίδει.

we can but persuade ourselves to lead a Life of Self-denial. This kind of Life, though it seem severe, is the Foundation of the purest Joy, and most delightful Satisfaction. A Soul that inhabits a Body softened with Pleasures, is in a State of Slavery, and is the Prey of Passions and Remorse; but that which dwells in a Body tamed and brought into subjection, is free, happy, quiet, is a true Ray of the Divine Essence, exempt from a thousand hurtful Passions, a thousand mean and shameful Designs, and a thousand Griefs that befall such as are not Masters over their own Bodies.

IV. There is one thing more to be observed in relation to the Body, whereon also Chastity has a great dependance, and that is, the Government of the Eyes and Looks. This is an Assertion of great weight, and which I have already touched upon * in the former Part of this Treatise. I have cited also what our Lord Christ says of unclean Looks, *St. Matth. ch. v.* And those words of *Job, ch. xxxi. 1.* *I have made a covenant with mine Eyes, not to look upon a Maid.* All that indulge themselves in impure Thoughts, know by their own experience, that these begin almost always by the Sight. Here therefore are two things to be observed. The first, not to seek after Objects that may seduce us; they that do this, are first in the Temptation; they willingly expose themselves to it, and so must needs fall by it. The second is, not to fix our Eyes upon such Objects when they come in our way, but instantly turn away from them. We cannot be too wary in this respect, but must arm ourselves with a firm Resolution, and must put it in execution, without taking time to consider, so soon as ever the Occa-

* *Sect. I. Ch. 7.*

Ch. 4. *Care to be taken of the Body.*

255

sion presents itself; nothing being quicker than a Look, and the Impression it makes upon the Heart; so that one Moment is Time enough for it to surprize us. One Look caused King *David's* dreadful Fall. Let every one therefore lay it down as a Law to himself, not to take the liberty to look at every thing that offers itself, not to fix his Eyes upon all the Persons and Objects he meets with; and to keep his Senses to himself.

These are the principal Means to be used as to the Body, in order to Chastity, and there is none but ought to make what advantage he can of them; there being none of us but has a Body, and none therefore but ought to be afraid lest this Body prove the Cause and Instrument of his Destruction. But the properest Season for the Use of these Means, is in Youth, this being the Age wherein the Danger is greatest, because the Body being then in its full Strength, it is so much the more liable to corrupt the Soul, and draw it into the Excesses of Impurity. Then therefore is the Time of keeping under the Body. And this also will be a Means of preventing the Temptations of Uncleanness, and continuing Chast for ever after. And that we may the better improve what has been said, it will be requisite to add hereto the Reflections which were made in the Third Section of the former Part, Chap. 3; where I have shewn, Intemperance, Idleness, too great Care of the Body, and a Love of Pleasures, to be the usual Occasions of Uncleanness.

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C H A P. V.

Of the Cares which relate to the Soul.

WHat has been said, does not so entirely relate to the Body; but that the Use of these Means will prove highly advantageous also to the Soul, and will serve to keep off many Temptations. But yet care is to be taken in some Instances that have a more particular relation to the Soul. If the Body be necessarily to be tamed, the Soul also is no less to be brought into subjection. And what is to be done to this end, may be reduced to these two Duties; studying to put away Evil Thoughts, and labouring for Good ones.

I. Evil Thoughts may be put away, either by casting them off as soon as ever they offer themselves, (which will be the Subject of the next Chapter) or by preventing their first rise. Which at first sight appears a difficult Task, and really is so to those that have contracted an ill habit of entertaining themselves with these sort of Thoughts. Such know not how to get rid of them, without great Foresight; and it is what they ought earnestly to labour at, till they have brought themselves to that pass, that they shall have stop't the Spring whence impure Thoughts incessantly flow. And these are some of the ways of succeeding in such an Attempt.

1. Persons save themselves from multitudes of Evil Thoughts, when they avoid the Occasions and Objects which are wont to produce them; (as I have shewn before.)

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2. Persons should accustom themselves to fix their Mind, so as that it do not wander, nor be distracted. It is a wicked Liberty, to suffer the Imagination to rove after all sorts of Objects, and to hearken to all the Thoughts that present themselves. Whence it comes to pass, that these Thoughts press such on to divers Miscarriages; and so much the more unavoidably, because after they have once found the way to their Heart, they presently become habitual, and so the more powerful upon this account. More especially this happens, in those Thoughts which gratifie their Sensuality; as is well known to great numbers of People, who have contracted this unhappy Habit. Such commonly entertain themselves with divers foolish and wanton Imaginations; their Soul is full of corrupt and lascivious Ideas, with which they are continually poison'd more and more, and kindle in themselves more and more the Fire of Lust. For Cure of this so great a Fault, and which, if not amended, will certainly ruine them, Persons should settle their Minds, and not accustom themselves to think of too many things, nor busie themselves about what signifies nothing, or what is wicked. And for this cause, it is highly useful to govern well the Senses, and particularly the Sight, to shun whatever makes the Thoughts go astray, not to be too free, and not to talk too much. Reading, Meditation, and good Discourse, are very proper for fixing the Mind, and keeping it from wandring.

3. The Memory is also to be brought into Order, and taught, not to call back those impure Notions and Matters that we may have read of, seen, or heard, or which we may have fancied to ourselves: All these things are to be blotted, as far as may be, out of the Mind; and if at any time they recur to our Thoughts, great heed must be taken to prevent their stay there, and we must

must speedily eject them, and set ourselves to think of something else.

4. Curiosity being a frequent Cause of the Wandrings of the Minds and Heart; and a Desire of satisfying it, being a great occasion of Pollution, this also is to be guarded against. Men desire to hear, see, read, know such or such things, which they take to be meer Matter of Curiosity, and that this Desire is therefore wholly innocent; but would they seriously examine themselves, they would discover some secret Passion that made them thus inquisitive. Wherefore, whosoever would be pure, must believe himself to be undoubtedly concern'd to resist this vain, imprudent, and sometimes carnal Curiosity, that makes us so earnest to inform ourselves of what is not at all necessary to be known.

II. But it is not enough to ward off Evil Thoughts: We must labour also to have Good ones; and to this end, must give them Entertainment when they present themselves, and must seek after them when they do not.

1. I say, in the first place, That we must be ready to admit of, and entertain them, whenever they present themselves. And indeed, it contributes very much to the Purity of the Soul, to make a good Improvement of those Moments wherein it is well disposed. There are divers Circumstances that bring good Thoughts into the Mind, and put it upon serious and profitable Reflections. As is especially evident in Times of Affliction, or when Persons apply themselves to holy Exercises, to Reading, or to Prayer, or when all the Passions are quiet. When they find themselves in any of these favourable Circumstances, they must be very industrious to improve them aright, by cherishing these good Thoughts, dwelling upon them, retaining them as long as they can, and not letting their Minds wander after
other

other Objects. Then is the Time for them to encourage themselves in Chastity, by representing to themselves the Excellency and the Necessity of this Virtue, and considering how happy a Man is when he has got rid of a Voluptuous course of Life, and how miserable and wretched whilst he indulges himself in it. Then that is easie to him, which at another time would be accounted very difficult; and by a good Improvement of these short Intervals, a considerable Progress may be made in Purity.

2. Since Good Thoughts are of such advantage, care must be taken to raise them, and produce them as much as may be. This is worth taking Pains for: For Evil Thoughts spring up abundantly, and there are many things, both within us and without us, that easily give occasion for them. Infomuch, that unless due Care be had to store ourselves with good Thoughts, to set in opposition to so many vain and sinful Thoughts, those will be sure to get the possession of our Hearts. Now the Means of being furnished with Good Thoughts, are, Reading, Prayer, Religious Conversation, Acquaintance with those that are good, and Retirement. It conduces also extremely to this Purpose, to settle our Minds, and govern our Imaginations, (as has been said) so as that they may present us with no Idea's or Desires but what are pure. Our Minds should also have a stock of Arguments, for dissuading from Impurity, and inviting to Chastity; by which means, we should have a Fountain of good Thoughts within ourselves. But it is especially of great Advantage to follow these two Advices; namely, to have good Thoughts in the Morning as soon as we awake; and, to get a Habit of intermixing them with our other Affairs all the Day after.

I add farther, That it is singularly useful, to labour after Spiritual Pleasures, and accustom our-

selves to a sense of them ; that so one Pleasure may drive away another. I wish none would ever draw to himself too inviting a Scene of Corporal Pleasures , nor would delude himself into a belief, that it is a peculiar happiness to enjoy them. On the contrary, they are to be look'd upon as vain, transient, and dangerous. And Persons would do well to reflect, that Death will one day strip them of whatsoever they esteem most charming in this World, and then all their Pleasures will be at an end, and will leave nothing to those who are most enamour'd of them, but cruel Remorse. A Wise Man and a Christian will often think upon this ; and will call to mind, that he has a Spiritual and Immortal Soul, and is call'd to the Possession of Bliss and Glory. He will endeavour after those true Pleasures, those pure Delights, and that inward Peace, which naturally flows from a Sense of God's Favour, and an Expectation of the Heavenly Felicity. These just and wise Reflections every one should make, as being highly useful in order to an utter dislike of the ignominious and sinful Pleasures of the Flesh, and for banishing foolish Thoughts and sensual Imaginations, and raising the Soul to great Purity.

C H A P. VI.

Of what is to be done when under Temptations.

BY reducing to Practice, what has been discoursed in the foregoing Chapters, many Temptations are avoided ; yet can they not all be so prevented, but that the most vigilant will be liable to them from time to time. Besides that, there are multitudes, who, by having neglected the

the promotion of Chastity, and suffer'd themselves to be enticed to Sensuality, are assaulted by frequent returns of this Passion, and are in danger of deadly Falls: So that it will be necessary to shew what is to be done when under a present Temptation.

I. And here my chief Advice, and which, if duly practised, were sufficient of itself, relates to the Beginnings of Temptations: And it is this; That as soon as ever any impure Thoughts arise in the Soul, they be instantly resisted and driven away. This is the most certain, and at the same time the easiest Means of securing ourselves against Impurity.

1. It is the most certain Means, because hereby Persons preserve themselves infallibly from all the mischievous Consequences these first Motions might have. The first Moment almost wholly determines the Event of a Temptation; inasmuch as if at first withstood, it is usually conquer'd; but if it be suffer'd and hearkened to for ever so little a time, it gains its point. The first reception of impure Thoughts into the Soul, shews them to be pleasing to it; and the longer they are entertained there, the more this Pleasure encreases; and when this Pleasure once prevails, the Man is no longer in a capacity to defend himself. There is no surer way to prevent a Conflagration, than to put out the first spark of Fire; and it would be weakly done to let it kindle, in expectation of being able to extinguish it afterwards: So also in Sicknes, the safest way is to provide early against them, and stop them at their first appearance.

2. I noted, That this Means is likewise easie. The first beginning of a Temptation, is the time when it is weakest; and by consequence, it is then best dealt with. People complain of the Strength of Temptations, and the difficulty of

conquering them ; but were it not for themselves, they would neither be so strong, nor so hard to be overcome. It is true, there is a great deal of trouble in encountering them, when they have been permitted to gather strength ; but it were no such task to strangle them in the birth, for then there needs but little force to oppose them, because they are of little force themselves.

But when these Beginnings are slighted, and wicked Thoughts are suffer'd to settle themselves in the Soul, they soon get a great advantage over it. Impurity, together with Anger, is perhaps the first Passion which, above all the rest, has the quickest Motions, and makes the speediest Progress. Upon any the least occasion it captivates the Heart, so that the Man can neither argue against it, nor resist it. It is a Fire which spreads itself with such astonishing swiftness, that its first breaking out is scarce observed, before the whole House is all in a Flame. It is an Enemy that by no means seems terrible at the first on-set, but which makes great advances by the least favour is shewn it ; insomuch that if a Person does not resist it at first, he will find himself overcome almost in the same instant wherein he is assaulted : So that we can never be too observant of the first stirrings of Lust, to get them stifled immediately.

Now that it may appear the more distinctly how a Man should manage himself in the first beginnings of a Temptation, I say, that he must forthwith turn away his Mind from impure Thoughts, without concerning himself with them, without staying to consider them, without weighing which side is to be chosen. If he stand to parly with his Lust, he is in a fair way to be taken in its snares ; for this shews him disposed to hearken to them, at least that he is not fully resolved to reject them. We must therefore be sure to get immediately at a distance from these
fort

fort of Thoughts, to turn away instantly our Eyes, our Senses, and our Minds from whatever we foresee like to seduce us, and, in a word, to flee from it. Some Temptations are to be resolutely encountred; but as to this, the safest way is to shun it; and the honourablest Victory, is not by coming to grapple with the Enemy, but by avoiding the Combat. St. Chrysostom * alledges to this purpose the Example of Job; he notes, that this holy Man, who did not flee when Satan came to attack him, but enter'd the Lists with this dangerous Enemy, fled however at what might possibly have prejudiced his Chastity; as these words testifie, *I have made a covenant with mine Eyes; Why then should I look upon a Maid?* Job xxxi. 1.

Let us not flatter or deceive ourselves, by imagining there is no great hurt in the beginnings of a Temptation, that these first Motions do not necessarily lead to the Sin, or, if they did, they might however be stopt by the way. This is a trick of the Passion, by which it deludes us; and they which have such-like Thoughts, may learn, by their own experience, that nothing is vainer, or falser. When a Man has given a Temptation time to grow strong, he will not afterwards have it in his power to put a stop to it. So that the wisest course he can take, is to have a great distrust of himself, and not run the danger of a trial; but as soon as ever he perceives any irregular motion within himself, to fall immediately to his business, without hesitation, or much considering about it.

II. To this most important Advice, some others may be added.

1. The first is, Not to be discouraged, when assaulted by impure Thoughts. I do not mean,

* Serm. de Continen.

that they should be look'd upon with an unconcernedness, and People should give themselves no trouble about them ; for, on the contrary, they are to be resolutely opposed, (as I have been proving :) But my Intention is, that Persons should not be disheartned, and give over the design they had formed, of keeping themselves clear of this Vice : They must not conceit it will be impossible to succeed in such an Undertaking, nor that they are clearly forsaken of God : Their business is rather, to humble themselves under a sense of their own Corruption, and to resist it, and then to hope in the Mercy and Assistance of the Lord.

2. Besides, recourse must be had, in times of Temptation, to holy Exercises, and Acts of Devotion. Short Ejaculations, whether only by raising up the Heart to God, or addressed to Him with the Mouth when one is alone, are very proper at such a time. And though Persons do not offer them up with Earnestness and Freedom enough, which in truth is very difficultly done in the state they are in at such a time, and especially when they are lukewarm and in trouble, they must not however fail to send them up as they can. It is likewise very useful under a Temptation, to turn the Mind to other Thoughts ; for instance, to call to remembrance, that God sees us, and is near to us ; to think of our Lord, and his Sufferings ; or of Death, and the Last Judgment, or any other of the great Motives to Chastity which have been already treated of : Recourse also may be had to Reading, upon these Occasions.

3. Not only Holy Exercises, but other things likewise of no great consideration in themselves, may serve to deliver us from the Temptations of Impurity ; as, not to stay in the Place where we are, nor to take our ease, to apply ourselves immediately

mediately to some sort of business, or get into Company, or fall upon some Discourse. A change of Posture, or Motion of the Body, sometimes suffices to prevent a train of evil Thoughts. There are some things that seem not worth minding, small, and even contemptible, that yet are not without their usefulness this way. But above all these Means, every one must consult himself, and see what is like to make most impression upon him.

And yet once more I must observe, That all this is to be done resolutely and undauntedly. 1. In the first place, Men must not be discouraged either by their own Weakness, or their Backwardness to set about it. Though these Means are practised but imperfectly and unsteadily, this however will turn to some account, provided it be done sincerely, and with Perseverance. 2. Neither must they be affrighted at the Trouble they find in resisting the Allurements of Lust. To this end let them remember for their Encouragement, that their Conflict will not be long, but if they can but hold out for a few Moments, they will presently be safe, and the Storm allayed; and after this they will have the Satisfaction of having done their Duty, and will taste an inward Peace rejoicing and strengthening the Soul, and exciting them to a Performance of their Duty upon all other Occasions that shall offer themselves.

C H A P. VII.

*Of the Assistance that may be had from Others
in order to Chastity.*

AFTER the Consideration of what each one is to do in order to Chastity, I am next to shew what Helps to Virtue may be found in others. And this is so much the more necessary, because this

this perhaps is the Means least taken notice of, and most neglected.

I. Nor have we less need to be assistant to one another, in Matters of Salvation, than in those of this Life. This mutual Help is one of the most indispensable Duties of Charity; and as such is often prescribed by the Apostles. † *Exhort one another daily; || let us consider one another daily to provoke unto Love, and to good Works.*

† Heb. 3.
13.
|| Heb. 10.
24.

Neither is it to be doubted, but it highly conduces to the promotion of Piety, and more particularly of Chastity, to partake of the Company and Discourse of Virtuous Persons. For as this Virtue is lost by conversing with the Vicious and Debauched, so it is preserved and improved by Communication of those that fear God. The Example of such is of great weight, and their Counsels of great force for purifying the Heart. Good Conversation is of inconceivable advantage, I mean such Conversation where each Party speaks with an Openness of Heart, and with Confidence, and Sincerity. And a Man does not leave such Society without carrying some Fruit of it along with him.

2. The Scripture teaches likewise that we may assist each other with our Prayers. The greatest part of Christians have but little knowledge of the Efficacy of Prayer, and for want of Faith make little use of this Means, as taking it to be of no great service to them. But it is most certain that

* St. Ja. 5.
16.

** the fervent Prayer of a Righteous Man avails much with God; and he is always disposed to bestow his Favours, when sincerely solicited in behalf of such an one as greatly desires them, and to this end desires also the Intercession of other good Christians for obtaining them. Whence I conclude that whosoever desires to overcome the Passions of the Flesh, must beg the Help of his faithful Brethren, and particularly must entreat the Assistance of their Prayers.*

3. But

3. But chiefly Others may help us by their Advice and Exhortations. It is not to be expressed of what advantage it is, to have a faithful Friend from whom to receive Counsel and Encouragement in time of need, and principally to such as have little Prospect of Success from their own single Endeavours. † *Wo to him that is alone when he falleth,* † Eccles. 4. 10. *for he hath not another to help him up.* A Man is always in a woful Condition, and in danger of committing great Offences, when he consults none but himself, and relies solely upon his own Understanding. This is true in the things of this Life, and it is no less so in what concerns our everlasting Salvation. One of the chief Reasons why so few make any considerable Progress in Goodness is, because in Affairs of this nature People love to act separately, without asking others Advice, or being willing to be advised by any. But no where does this Observation hold more certainly than in the Case of Uncleaness. Persons will venture to discover something of their other Sins, but will not own this in the least; they are so ashamed of it, that this makes them reserved, and they very hardly prevail with themselves to take Advice concerning it, or to confess their Weakness. Or perhaps they cannot think of one of whom they may prudently ask Advice, or to whom they may disclose their Case, either as to this or any other Sin; this being what the greater part never once dream of.

Yet it is plain this would be an admirable Means of delivering ourselves from many Disturbances and Dangers. Some know not whether certain Actions are allowed or forbidden, and so for want of better Information, they venture, uncertain as they are, to do what perhaps is contrary to Chastity, and even infamous and sinful; and which had it not been evil in its own nature, would yet be so to them, because they act it doubtingly, and not

not of Faith. Others are sensible of their deplorable State, and have an intention to get out of it, and make some Attempts this way, but without Success, because they have none to assist them. Not to say any thing of those who being guilty of Sins of Uncleanness, have need to consult with such as may instruct them, how to make amends for what they have done. Each of these has need of Assistance. A hidden Evil is always dangerous, but when discovered it is half cured. We may easily have taken notice of such who, whilst obstinately resolved not to ask Advice concerning the State of their Heart, keeping it closely to themselves, have had no Rest, nor been able to free themselves from the Tyranny of their Passions; but who so soon as ever they have had the Courage to disburden their Consciences, and make known what it was that troubled them, found themselves instantly comforted and strengthened, and thenceforward supplied with new Forces in order to their better Progress in Piety.

Why then are People so backward to make use of so beneficial a Remedy? Will they say they do not know to whom they may apply themselves? The number of Wise-Men, and Men of Probity is not so small but that such may be found, either amongst those whom God has ordain'd to instruct others, and guide their Consciences, or else amongst Private Persons. Or is it Shame that hinders their doing it? If so, in the first place, it is not necessary in all Cases to discover what they are most averse to having known, but there are secret Means and Methods of desiring Advice and Counsel, without such a Declaration. Besides suppose by letting their Case be known, they venture some Shame and Confusion of Face, is it not much prudenter and safer, and much better in all respects to discover a Distemper, than live in continual Torment by concealing it, and at length
perish

perish by it? He that has the Courage to make this acknowledgment, hereby shews himself to be affected with his Condition, and desirous to get out of it, and has in truth already made a good step towards his Conversion. As also the Sinner who is covered with Confusion in the Sight of God for his Faults, which he has committed, does not stand in such Awe of Men, nor is so fearful of exposing himself to some little Mortification.

II. Since we are treating of the Assistance that may be received from others, it must be noted that there are such to be found as may contribute considerably to the promoting of Chastity, I mean Publick Persons and Parents.

1. If those in Publick Stations would heartily set themselves to it, they might in a great measure suppress the Excesses of Impurity, and make the Manners of Christians much chaster than they are. Good Order both in Church and State would conduce very much to it. The Ministers of God's Word may employ themselves both in Publick, in giving good Instructions and frequent Admonitions concerning this Point, in their Sermons; and in Private, in exhorting zealously and prudently those who are backward to their Duty. Magistrates may also do great Service, by enacting wise and just Laws against this Sin; by an exact Observance and Execution of the Laws thus enacted; by not suffering those Places where Youth are corrupted, and accustomed to Play, to Riot, and to Debauchery; and in not bearing with those who are the Promoters of Leudness, and Corrupters of Youth, and who serve only to introduce Effeminacy, Wantonness, and Love of Pleasures. There are some places where the Magistrates make this their Business; and it were heartily to be wished, that all would do it every where.

2. Fathers and Mothers may also contribute much to the Chastity of Youth. If they would do

what

what they can in their Families, and what it is not hard to do, there would not be so much Unclean-ness in the World. This I have said before, but cannot forbear repeating it. Parents should bring up their Children in great Purity, and should from their Infancy inspire them as much as may be with a Sense of Modesty, even in the smallest Matters, and not suffer the least Indecency amongst them, nor allow them to say or do any thing contrary to Chastity. This might easily be done, and with good Success, because these Principles of Modesty enter of themselves into Childrens Minds, and when well imprinted there, serve thenceforward as for an excellent Preservative from Impurity. Whereas if Children once grow careless in point of Modesty, they seldom resume it afterwards. Wherefore Parents should take heed what Example they set their Children, that themselves be pure, and extraordinarily circumspect both in their Actions and in their Words; I say, not only to forbear all filthy Discourse, which none will indulge themselves in that are not utterly void of Virtue and Modesty, but to refrain from whatsoever is a little too loose, and never to laugh at any thing that has the least relation to Impurity, but on the contrary to testify always their Dislike and Aversion to whatever hurts Modesty in any manner of way. Fathers and Mothers should likewise teach their Children to mortify their Bodies and their Passions, to be contented with little, and always easy; they should train them up in great Sobriety, and beware that Idleness and Sloth get not the possession of them, nor a fondness for Pleasures draw them aside, and that they read no bad Books. And as they grow up, they should still keep them in a State of Dependence upon themselves, and have their Eyes upon them, to see them well employed, and not let them be abroad at Night, and thoroughly to inform themselves what Company they keep, and what

what Places they frequent; and when they are put out, to take all possible Care that a Wise and Prudent Person have the inspection over them.

C H A P. VIII.

Some Directions concerning the Use of these Means.

HAVING directed to such Means, and laid down such Rules as are necessary in order to this Virtue of Chastity, I shall now apply myself, for a Conclusion of the Whole, to shew how they may be usefully reduced to Practice, for the Instruction of those who desire to be benefited by them, and chiefly with a Design to make the Practice easy. For it is not sufficient to say there are Means of being Chast, but it is more especially needful to shew, that when used as they ought to be, there is no such trouble as Men imagine in living Chastly. And what I have to add in this Chapter deserves to be considered with more than ordinary Attention.

I. The first Advice I have to offer is, That each one make use of these Means according to the State he is in, there being Three States, in either of which he may be, in relation to Impurity.

1. There are some who have no Inclination to this Vice; or if they had would take care to keep themselves free from it. These have great reason to bless God; yet they should not fail to make use of the Means here prescribed, for settling themselves the more firmly in this happy State. None should be remiss and unguarded, because many times those Passions press with great violence, out of the reach of which Persons had thought themselves. A most remarkable Example in this kind we have in King *Salomon*, who in his Younger Years was an un-

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paralleled Example of Wisdom and yet in the latter part of his Life gave way to an infamous Passion, and hereby left himself for a Warning to all the World, not excepting those who have the least Apprehension of falling after the same manner. But here it is also to be remembred, that such who are not subject to this Passion, will find it no difficult matter to preserve themselves from it. It is with these as with Men in Health, who need only Foresight and Observation, to keep themselves so.

2. There are multitudes of Others, that have a deadly hankering after Impurity, and suffer themselves to be sometimes betrayed into it, but yet do not allow themselves wholly in it, but strive against it so far that they not only have escaped the Crime, but have never been brought to an entire Consent of the Will to it, much less to a Habit of it. Those of this second Rank have more need of Direction than the former, and must take more Pains, and strive harder to secure themselves.

3. Lastly, Some are Slaves to this Passion, in whom it reigns, and who have either ventured upon the Sin itself, or if not, are however commonly full of sensual Desires, and defile both Soul and Body by their inordinate Actions, Words, and Thoughts. The Estate of these last is extremely deplorable, and very dangerous; and they have more need to consider with themselves, and make use of those Remedies, which may recover them out of this Condition. I cannot better compare these, than to those Sick Persons whose Distemper is come to that height, that without a speedy Medicine well applied, they must perish. I do not deny but such, who are thus impure both by Inclination and Custom, will meet with difficulty in recovering themselves, and will find, at first, their Sin very hard to be overcome: As all experience, who will undertake to conquer any strong Passion, or any well-rooted Habit. Yet I have two things

to say, to prevent their suffering themselves to be affrighted from it. The one, That this Difficulty will be of no long continuance, the trouble of doing it being worst at the beginning, and growing afterwards more and more easie. The other, That this Work of their Conversion is not equally difficult at all times, but in some Circumstances is easily effected; as I shall prove, in treating of the next Particular. Wherefore,

II. My other Advice is of such importance, that I dare say it will conduce perhaps above all things to facilitate the Practice of the Duties we are now upon. There is no Time wherein Persons ought not to use their utmost Endeavours for overcoming their Inclination to Impurity; but withal, there are some Times and Opportunities, wherein it is done far more easily than at others. In Matters of Salvation, as well as in all others, a great deal depends upon a choice of proper Seasons. No body but must have found, that he is not always equally well disposed: Upon some Occasions, a thing will appear almost insuperable, and it cannot be done then without great opposition; which yet will not be so at another time. Take a Man given to any particular Passion, and in the instant when he is seized and transported with it, all you can say to the contrary will make no impression upon him: Yet take the same Man out of his Passion, and when his blood is cooled, and you will see him a very different sort of Person. The Impure have their intervals, and these longer or shorter, and more or less frequent, according as the Habit they have contracted is stronger or weaker. There are some in whom this Passion bears such absolute sway, that they are almost always employed by it; yet such as these have some more favourable Moments wherein they are capable of Reflection, and wherein their Passion allows them some respite.

God, who is full of Goodness and Love to Mankind, and desires the Salvation of Sinners, does not entirely forsake them. He speaks to their Consciences divers ways, and sometimes they hear his Voice, and are affected with it; they begin to relent, they review the Miscarriages of their past Conversation, and are humbled for them. The Preaching of God's Word, the Use of the Sacraments, the inward Operation of the Holy-Ghost, the Disgrace they have suffered for their Folly, the appearance of some Object, and the Reflection they make at such times when their Conscience is awakened, may raise good Motions in them, they being then in an estate wherein to make good Resolutions, and begin to put them in execution. This therefore is a valuable Opportunity, and may turn to very good account, by their doing then, what they are not like to do at another time.

But more especially it concerns every one to make good Use of Times of Affliction. Afflictions, which are an excellent Means, and used as such by God, for withdrawing Men from their Iniquities, have a particular efficacy for taming fleshly Passions. And if there be any way to reclaim those who have habituated themselves to Impurity, these will do it, and they are also commonly the last Means God will try them with. For this cause therefore, he sends Pains, and long and grievous Diseases, which bring them to the very gates of the Grave, and at other times he exposes them to Ignominy and Disgrace. And it is obvious to observe, that when People are reduced to a state of Affliction and Sufferings, the Flesh loses a good part of its Dominion. The Passions cannot but be calmed, when the Body and Soul are mortified by Grief. This therefore is a most beneficial Circumstance in order to Conversion, and ought upon no terms to be neglected, any more than

than all those other like Advantages we at any time meet with.

Sinners and Libertines sometimes reason thus with themselves. When the Precepts, the Counsels, and the Motives of the Evangelical Morality are laid before them, they say, All this is true, and they are well satisfied these Commands are just, and the Means produce their Effect, when made use of: That it is easie to reform themselves, if they will heartily endeavour it; but the difficulty is, to make Persons willing to amend, and use these Means: That the Inclination which hinders their taking this Resolution, and prevents their Use of these Means, and draws them some other way, must first be rectified; and, in a word, That they want a Will to set about this Duty. Whereto I answer; God gives this Will; He allows Seasons and Junctures, in which Men may easily be willing to reform; when both the Sinners find themselves incited to do it, and besides, God inspires into them a Desire of doing it. I say farther, They ought to make a good Improvement of these Junctures, and the good Dispositions they find in themselves at such a time. I say again, If a Man take but a little Pains with himself, these favourable Circumstances will ever and anon return, and he will not be long before he may have made a considerable advancement in Goodness. So that I can give no better Advice to such as desire to renounce their Impurity, than to take the advantage of those Opportunities and Occasions, wherein they are at liberty, and in a state to make serious and useful Reflections.

III. Let not Persons be discouraged at the Beginning. This Advice is highly necessary for all that have the misfortune to be under the power of Carnal Passions; because they cannot hope to shake them off all at once, but will be in danger of some relapses; so that if they suffer themselves

to be worsted, it is certain they will never get free of them. It is not unusual for People to have taken up good Resolutions, and made some answerable Attempts, and to have concluded hereupon, that they had gained some advantage over themselves; but yet these being but weak Attempts, they have no sooner felt the returns of their Lust, but they have presently yielded to it, either through Surprise, or Negligence, and have been discouraged, and began to think they could never hope to rid themselves of this Passion, and it was therefore in vain to strive against it, and so have given over their Design, and grown as disorderly and licentious as ever. But it was a great failing in them to be so easily repulsed: For Habits are not extirpated all at once; and if all that have undertaken to work out their own Conversion, had given over upon a relapse, none of them possibly had ever been Converted. There is nothing of more pernicious consequence, than to be thus easily discouraged: For when a Man's Courage is once cast down, and he has taken up a persuasion that he shall not succeed, he will give over his Endeavours, and strive no longer; he will be sure to do well no longer, purely because he thinks he cannot; and ventures to become a greater Slave to his Passions, than ever he had been before.

What a Christian does for God and his own Salvation, should be done with Resolution and Confidence, and even with Joy. The weakest of them, and who have made the least progress, should persuade themselves, that their first Beginnings will be accepted with God, provided they be sincere; and that though they do unhappily relapse, they must yet beware of being disheartned. It is a great happiness, on the other hand, when our Falls make us uneasy, when they teach us how far our Passions have got the mastery of us, and what great reason we have to labour incessantly that we may
over-

overcome them, and may recover ourselves out of the great Danger whereinto they had brought us. These Falls must not be slighted or despised. But I must repeat it again ; They must by no means dishearten us, or take us off from what we were about : But rather we should animate ourselves the more, and strive to get above them, and renew our former Resolutions against them : Which if we do, our Gracious God will infallibly bless our Endeavours, and, for the Love of Christ, will pardon those Falls which are not wilfully persisted in. Whereas, if we be discouraged and faint, we become a Prey to Temptations, and shall be involved in them more and more. A wise Man having happened to fall, would get up again and continue on his Journey ; but he that should choose to lie where he fell, without trying to rise, would be deservedly look'd upon as one who had lost his Senses.

I beseech my Readers to put a favourable Construction upon what I write, and not to misinterpret what I have been discoursing. I have written it for the Encouragement of the Weak, such I mean as act sincerely, though with Weakness, and who meet with some success in their Endeavours of Amendment. For what I say, relates not to those who content themselves with weak and imperfect Resolutions of Amendment, without putting them in execution, and are ready, upon every Temptation, to recede from them. These sort of loose and ineffectual Resolutions are taken up by abundance of Persons, who yet notwithstanding perish in their Impenitence.

IV. To be benefited by these Advices, it will be necessary to pursue them with Diligence and Perseverance ; and not carelessly, negligently, or only for a while : They must be follow'd heartily and earnestly, this being the only Method of attaining to Virtue. Our Lord Jesus Christ, and his

his Apostles, exhort us to *strive that we may enter in at the straight gate*; to *watch, and fight, and take pains*: But these Endeavours are especially required, when we are to resist such Temptations as entice by Pleasure, and, above all, at the Beginning, because that is the Time when we are to expect the sharpest Conflicts. The Spiritual Life begins with Pain and Grief, unless where Persons have entred upon it in their Youth. When Men begin to think of returning, and taming the Flesh, and bringing it into subjection to the Spirit, and the Bonds which now tie us to Pleasures begin to be broken, then it is that we suffer most, then it is that the Flesh revolts, and that we have need of striving to get the mastery over it. Afterwards our Work becomes much easier; and the greater progress we make, the more does the opposition of the Flesh abate, and the weaker do the Passions grow; till we come by degrees to do well without opposition, and with Delight.

Till Persons are come to this state, they must set themselves to work, and never give over. It is only by Perseverance, that advantage can be made of the Means which are appointed in order to Chastity. It is not to be imagined that these Means will at once produce all the Good that may be hoped for from them; and which they effect only gradually, and by little and little. It is likewise only by Perseverance, that long and settled Habits are to be rooted out. Many have undertaken, and with some sincerity, to depart from their Impurity, and have soon returned to it; because they have not attended to this Advice. They began happily enough; they endeavour'd, for some time, to mortifie their Passions, and with some success; but for want of persevering as they had begun, lost the fruit of all they had done.

V. These Means must be exactly pursued, and with a circumspection reaching to the smallest matters.

matters. It is not to be thought that any Counsels or Helps to Chastity may be neglected. Nor may any fantasie it enough to be exact in the Duties and Counsels which are of greatest consequence, and to abstain from what is sinful, or manifestly leads to Sin ; and that he may slight those Counsels which appear of less importance, and take his full liberty in lesser matters. In the case of Chastity, there is nothing wherein Persons must not be nicely punctual ; nor may they gratifie or excuse themselves in any thing that is detrimental to Virtue, nor neglect any thing of all that may capacitate them to acquire or preserve it.

In all the Passions, but chiefly in this, regard must be had to lesser matters ; because little things lead to greater. By light Faults, a Man comes to great Sins ; and the Observation of lesser Duties, may be a Means of leading to the highest degree of Virtue. Often-times there needs only a want of Watchfulness over ourselves : A Look, a Deed, or a Word a little too wanton, a light Compliance with the Flesh, or other things of this nature, which seem to have no great harm in them ; there needs nothing more, I say, to overturn the Soul, and kindle the Fire of Lust, and this too in a very little time. And again, we as often need only to be attentive and circumspect in relation to some things in appearance of little consideration, to preserve ourselves pure and quiet. A small matter, and which is next to nothing, by the way of speaking it may occasion fatal Miscarriages ; and sometimes again, a very little matter may serve to defend against Temptations. Besides, when People overlook the least Duties, and accustom themselves to violate them wilfully and without hesitation, they expose themselves to the danger of taking the same liberty with those of the highest importance. So that to this purpose may be applied what our Lord says,

St. Luke

St. Luke xvi. 10. He who is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and what we read in Ecclesiasticus xix. 1. He who despiseth small things, shall fall by little and little. And yet nothing of all that may conduce to so great and so excellent an End, as is our Supreme Felicity, deserves to be accounted small, or of little importance.

These are the principal Means that are to be made use of, in order to our becoming Chast, and with which I conclude this Treatise. And those who will give a serious Attention to the Considerations I have offer'd concerning both Uncleanneſs and Chastity, may make good Use of them. But such over whom a foolish and brutal Passion has more Power than all Arguments from Religion, their Duty, and their Interest, will leave themselves without excuse. God grant I may not have labour'd in vain in what I have written, but that my weak Endeavours may serve to inspire all that shall read this Discourse with the Love and hearty Desire of Chastity.

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